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Poetry

A Magazine of Verse

Edited by Harriet Monroe

APRIL, 1915

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PASSAGES FROM A POEM: THE NEW WORLD

I

CELIA was laughing. Hopefully I said:
"How shall this beauty that we share,
This love, remain aware
Beyond our happy breathing of the air?
How shall it be fulfilled and perfected?
If you were dead,
How then should I be comforted?"
But Celia knew instead:
"He who takes comfort here, shall find it there."
A halo gathered round her hair.
I looked and saw her wisdom bare
The living bosom of the countless dead . . .
And there
I laid my head.

Again, when Celia laughed, I doubted her and said:
"Life must be led
In many ways more difficult to see
Than this immediate way
For you and me.
We stand together on our lake's edge, and the mystery
Of love has made us one, as day is made of night and night of day.
Conscious of one identity
Within each other, we can say,
'I love you, all that you are.'
We are uplifted till we touch a star.
We know that overhead
Is nothing more austere, more starry, or more deep to understand
Than is our union, human hand in hand . . .
But over our lake come strangers . . . a crowded launch, a lonely sailing boy.
A mile away a train bends by. In every car
Strangers are travelling, each with particular
And unkind preference like ours, with privacy
Of understanding, with especial joy
Like ours. Celia, Celia, why should there be
Distrust between ourselves and them, disunity?
How careful we have been
To trim this little circle that we tread,
To set a bar
To strangers and forbid them! Are they not as we,

Our very likeness and our nearest kin?
How can we shut them out and let stars in?"

She looked along the lake. And when I heard her speak,
The sun fell on the boy's white sail and on her cheek.
"I touch them all through you," she said. "I cannot know
them now
Deeply and truly as my very own, except through you,
Except through one or two
Interpreters.
But not a moment stirs
Here between us, binding and interweaving us,
That does not bind these others to our care."

The sunlight fell in glory on her hair;
And then said Celia, laughing, when I held her near:
"They who take comfort there, shall find it here."

So when the sun stood sharp that day
Behind the shadowy firs,
This poem came to me to say,
My word and hers.
"Record it all," said Celia, "more than merely this,
More than the shine of sunset on our heads, more than a kiss,
More than our rapt agreement and delight
Watching the mountain mingle with the night . . .
Tell that the love of two incurs

The love of multitudes, makes way
And welcome for them, as a solitary star
Brings on the great array.
Go make a calendar,"
She said, "immortalize this day."

II

"A stranger might be God," the Hindus cry.
But Celia says, importunate:
"The stranger must be God, and you and I."

III

Once in a smoking-car I saw a scene
That made my blood stand still.
The sun was smouldering in a great ravine,
And I, with elbow on the window-sill,
Was watching the dim ember of the west,
When hushed and low, but poignant as a bell
For fire, there came a moan: the voice of one in hell.

Across the car were two young men,
French by their look, and brothers,
Unhappy men who had been happy boys,
And one was moaning on the other's breast.
His face was hid away. I could not tell
What words he said, half English and half French. I only knew

Both men were suffering, not one but two.
And then that face came into view,
Gaunt and unshaved, with shadows and wild eyes,
A face of madness and of desolation. And his cries,
For all his mate could do,
Rang out, a shrill unearthly noise,
And tears ran down the stubble of his cheek.

The other face was younger, clean and sad.
With the manful, stricken beauty of a lad
Who had intended always to be glad.
The touch of his compassion, like a mother's,
Guarded the madman, soothed him and caressed.
And then I heard him speak:
"Mon frère, mon frère!
Calme-toi! Right here's your place."
And, opening his coat, he pressed
Upon his heart the poor wet face
And smoothed the tangled hair.

After a peaceful moment there
The maniac screamed, struck out and fell
Across his brother's arm. Love could not quell
His fury. Wrists together high in air
He rose, and with a yell
Brought down his handcuffs toward the upturned face . . .
Then paused, then knelt—and then that sound, that moan,
Of one forsaken and alone:

"Seigneur!—le créateur du ciel et de la terre!—
Forgotten me, forgotten me!"
And then the voice grew weak,
The brother leaned to ease the huddled body. But a shriek
Repulsed him: *"Non! Détache-moi!* I don't care
For you. *Non! Tu es l'homme qui m'a trahi!*
Non! Tu n'es pas mon frère!"

But as often as that mind would fill
With the great anguish and the rush of hate,
The boy, his young eyes older, older,
Would curve his shoulder
To the other's pain, and bind
Their hearts again, and say: "Oh, wait!
You'll know me better by and by.
Mon pauvre petit, be still—
Right here's your place."

The seeing gleam, the blinded stare,
The cry:
"Non, tu n'es pas mon frère!"

I saw myself, myself, as blind
As he. For something smothers
My reason. And I do not know my brothers . . .
But every day declare:
"Non, tu n'es pas mon frère!"

IV

I know a fellow in a steel-mill who, intent
Upon his labors and his happiness, had meant
In his own wisdom to be blest,
Had made his own unaided way
To schooling, opportunity,
Success. And then he loved and married. And his bride,
After a brief year, died.
I went to him, to see
If I might comfort him. The comfort came to me.

"David," I said, "under the temporary ache
There is unwonted nearness with the dead."
I felt his two hands take
The sentence from me with a grip
Forged in the mills. He told me that his tears were shed
Before her breath went. After that, instead
Of grief, she came herself. He felt her slip
Into his being like a miracle, her lip
Whispering on his, to slake
His need of her. "And in the night I wake
With wonder and I find my bride
And her embrace there in our bed,
Within my very being!—not outside.

"We have each other more, much more,"
He said, "now than before.

This very moment while I shake
Your hand, my friend,
She welcomes you as well as I,
And laughs with me because I cried
For her People would think me crazy if I told.
But something in what you said made me bold
To let you meet my bride!"

It was not madness. David's eye
Was clear and open-seeing.
His life
Had seen in his young wife,
As mine had seen when Celia died,
The secret of God's being.

V

Celia, perhaps the few
Whom I shall tell of you
Will see with me your beauty who are dead,
Will hear with me your voice and what it said!

Witter Bynner.

VENUS TRANSIENS

Tell me,
Was Venus more beautiful
Than you are,
When she topped
The crinkled waves,
Drifting shoreward
On her plaited shell?
Was Botticelli's vision
Fairer than mine;
And were the painted rosebuds
He tossed his lady
Of better worth
Than the words I blow about you
To cover your too great loveliness
As with a gauze
Of misted silver?

For me,
You stand poised
In the blue and buoyant air,
Cinctured by bright winds,
Treading the sunlight.
And the waves which precede you
Ripple and stir
The sands at my feet.

SOLITAIRE

When night drifts along the streets of the city,
And sifts down between the uneven roofs,
My mind begins to peek and peer.
It plays at ball in old, blue Chinese gardens,
And shakes wrought dice-cups in Pagan temples,
Amid the broken flutings of white pillars.
It dances with purple and yellow crocuses in its hair,
And its feet shine as they flutter over drenched grasses.
How light and laughing my mind is,
When all the good folk have put out their bed-room candles,
And the city is still!

RED SLIPPERS

Red slippers in a shop-window; and outside in the street, flaws of gray, windy sleet!

Behind the polished glass the slippers hang in long threads of red, festooning from the ceiling like stalactites of blood, flooding the eyes of passers-by with dripping color, jamming their crimson reflections against the windows of cabs and tram-cars, screaming their claret and salmon into the teeth of the sleet, plopping their little round maroon lights upon the tops of umbrellas.

Red Slippers

The row of white, sparkling shop-fronts is gashed and bleeding, it bleeds red slippers. They spout under the electric light, fluid and fluctuating, a hot rain—and freeze again to red slippers, myriadly multiplied in the mirror side of the window.

They balance upon arched insteps like springing bridges of crimson lacquer; they swing up over curved heels like whirling tanagers sucked in a wind-pocket; they flatten out, heelless, like July ponds, flared and burnished by red rockets.

Snap, snap, they are cracker sparks of scarlet in the white, monotonous block of shops.

They plunge the clangor of billions of vermilion trumpets into the crowd outside, and echo in faint rose over the pavement.

People hurry by, for these are only shoes, and in a window farther down is a big lotus bud of cardboard, whose petals open every few minutes and reveal a wax doll, with staring bead eyes and flaxen hair, lolling awkwardly in its flower chair.

One has often seen shoes, but whoever saw a cardboard lotus bud before?

The flaws of gray, windy sleet beat on the shop-window where there are only red slippers.

Amy Lowell

OUR DAILY BREAD

On the "Hunger Parade" of the unemployed—Chicago, January 17th, 1915

"Give us this day our daily bread—
Give us our right," the hungry said.
Walking along the darkening way,
"Give us our daily bread," we say.

Hark to the tread of the sullen feet,
Marching down the sleety street:
Hunger staggers along the way.
"Give us our bread and work—today!"

Swaying banners overhead—
"Give us this day our daily bread."
Masses of men and women throng—
Living witness of living wrong.

"Work, not charity!" is the cry.
Is it sincere—I know not, I!
What can I give but some small dole?
But—will that satisfy my soul?

Buffeting through the wind and the rain,
They will pass again and again,

Menacing all who are sleek and fed:
"Give—or we'll take—our daily bread."

Reads like a story of long ago:
"Driven by want, driven by woe,
Peasants arose and began to slay:"
But it all happened yesterday.

Reads like a tale from some far-off land,
Countries we do not understand
(Where there will be the devil to pay!)
But— it all happened across the way.

Rita Benton.

HEARTILY KNOW

Hypatia the heathen, pearl among women, sings:
"Zeus, Eros or Christ is only the vision that brings
Balm for your bruises, shapens and clips your wings."

Sappho of Firedom, amorous-perfect, speaks:
"I have been girdled by Eros for days and for weeks—
Alas! . . . Blow on, thou dawn-wind that wasteth my cheeks."

There was also a modern, a mind of ten thousand, who wrote:
"It is forbidden to name Jehovah. I vote
For a God of the atom, the air, the unknowable.—Quote!"

And you who cling to the peerless puzzle, say—
Will the God of to-morrow serve, or of yesterday?
Something divine must descend, for such is the call of the clay?

The God is in *you*. (Will your idols never be gone?)
Your firm and productive self is immortal as Avalon . .
Heaven and hell are old age; get off your knees and go on.

ERECT

One all against the world—
One undismayed, intact.
Shame when my flag is furled,
Death when I break my pact!

Life when I lonely strive,
Knowledge but of my own.
One lives who is alive,
One marches to the Throne.

FOR A MAP OF MARS

[The names are those commonly used by astronomers.]

When the Earth-king came to woo her,
 Long after the Earth was one,
Queen Phlargis, in Mars Planet,
 Had treatied with the Sun.

She had riven the ice forever
 Out of the Sirens' Sea,
Had bridged the Hyberborean
 And raised sky-towers three.

At the door of her frozen palace
Her heart was made as fire,
And she fled through many races
To the lands of broad Argyre.

Harold through all Arabia
Followed the flying Queen,
By the sands of Thimiamata,
By Gehon's gardens green;

In the City of Many Mountains,
'Twixt the Sun-Lake and Bay of Dawn,
Their armies still invisible,
Their souls together drawn,

They greatly grew in stature,
They joined their royal hands,
And the Earth's little ball became a thrall
To the sway of mightier lands.

But they, in the far Phaetontis,
Above the Sirens' Sea,
Stilled in music and marble,
Forgot the things to be.

E. Preston Dargan

ON FIRST LOOKING INTO THE MANUSCRIPT OF *ENDYMION*

In Mr. Morgan's Library

I dared not dream that this dream had come true:
That I was bending over that yellow page
Lit with his words—our boy, our poet, our sage—
And that I touched the parchment, old yet new,
Whereon his fingers once had been. I grew
Strangely afraid, as if some heritage
Of wonder from a distant, holy age
Had suddenly fallen on me, like soft dew.

"A thing of beauty is a joy forever" There
I read his lovely line, what time I dipped
Into that hushed and haunted manuscript
That love and time have made even lovelier.
Oh, I could only dream; yea, dream and weep . . .
Was it a vision?—Did I wake or sleep?

Charles Hanson Towne

NINETEEN-FOURTEEN

PEACE

Now, God be thanked who has matched us with his hour,
And caught our youth, and wakened us from sleeping!
With hand made sure, clear eye, and sharpened power,
To turn, as swimmers into cleanness leaping,
Glad from a world grown old and cold and weary;
Leave the sick hearts that honor could not move,
And half-men, and their dirty songs and dreary,
And all the little emptiness of love!
Oh! we, who have known shame, we have found release there,
Where there's no ill, no grief, but sleep has mending,
Naught broken save this body, lost but breath;
Nothing to shake the laughing heart's long peace there,
But only agony, and that has ending;
And the worst friend and enemy is but Death.

THE DEAD

These hearts were woven of human joys and cares,
Washed marvellously with sorrow, swift to mirth.
The years had given them kindness. Dawn was theirs,
And sunset, and the colors of the earth.
These had seen movement, and heard music; known
Slumber and waking; loved; gone proudly friended;

Felt the quick stir of wonder; sat alone;
 Touched flowers and furs, and cheeks. All this is ended.
There are waters blown by changing winds to laughter
And lit by the rich skies, all day. And after,
 Frost, with a gesture, stays the waves that dance
And wandering loveliness. He leaves a white
 Unbroken glory, a gathered radiance,
A width, a shining peace, under the night.

THE SOLDIER

If I should die, think only this of me:
 That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
 In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
 Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's, breathing English air,
 Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.
And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
 A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
 Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
 And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
 In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

Rupert Brooke

THE BIRD AND THE TREE

Blackbird, blackbird in the cage,
There's something wrong tonight.
Far off the sheriff's footfall dies,
The minutes crawl like last year's flies
Between the bars, and like an age
The hours are long tonight.

The sky is like a heavy lid
Out here beyond the door tonight.
What's that? A mutter down the street.
What's that? The sound of yells and feet.
For what you didn't do or did
You'll pay the score tonight.

No use to reek with reddened sweat,
No use to whimper and to sweat.
They've got the rope; they've got the guns,
They've got the courage and the guns;
And that's the reason why tonight
No use to ask them any more.
They'll fire the answer through the door—
You're out to die tonight.

There where the lonely cross-road lies,
There is no place to make replies;

But silence, inch by inch, is there,
And the right limb for a lynch is there;
And a lean daw waits for both your eyes,
Blackbird.

Perhaps you'll meet again some place.
Look for the mask upon the face:
That's the way you'll know them there—
A white mask to hide the face.
And you can halt and show them there
The things that they are deaf to now,
And they can tell you what they meant—
To wash the blood with blood. But how
If you are *innocent*?

Blackbird singer, blackbird mute,
They choked the seed you might have found.
Out of a thorny field you go—
For you it may be better so—
And leave the sowers of the ground
To eat the harvest of the fruit,
Blackbird.

Ridgely Torrence

THE WAYFARER

I

There is no glory of the sunset here!
Heavy the clouds upon the darkening road,
And heavy too the wind upon the trees!
The trees sway, making moan
Continuous, like breaking seas.
O impotent, bare things,
You give at last the very cry of Earth!
I walk this darkening road in solemn mood:
Within deep hell came Dante to a wood—
Like him I marvel at the crying trees!

II

Christ, by thine own darkened hour,
Live within me, heart and brain—
Let my hands not slip the rein!

Ah, how long ago it is
Since a comrade went with me!
Now a moment let me see

Thyself, lonely in the dark,
Perfect, without wound or mark!

III

To-morrow I will bend the bow:
My soul shall have her mark again,
My bosom feel the archer's strain.
No longer pacing to and fro
With idle hands and listless brain:
As goes the arrow forth I go.
My soul shall have her mark again,
My bosom feel the archer's strain.
To-morrow I will bend the bow.

IV

The drivers in the sunset race
Their coal-carts over cobble-stones—
Not draymen but triumphators:
Their bags are left with Smith and Jones,
They let their horses take their stride,
Which toss their forelocks in their pride.
Nor blue nor green these factions wear
Which make career o'er Dublin stones;
But Pluto his own livery
Is what each whip-carrier owns.
The Caesar of the cab-rank, I
Salute the triumph speeding by.

Padraic Colum

IN THE ORCHESTRA

He'd played each night for months, and never heard
A single tinkly tune, or caught a word
Of all the silly songs and sillier jests;
And he'd seen nothing, even in the rests,
Of that huge audience piled from floor to ceiling
Whose stacked white faces sent his dazed wits reeling . . .
He'd been too happy; and had other things
To think of while he scraped his fiddle-strings . . .

But now, he'd nothing left to think about—
Nothing he dared to think of . . .
In and out
The hollow fiddle of his head the notes
Jingled and jangled; and the raucous throats
Of every star rasped jibes into his ear,
Each separate syllable, precise and clear,
As though 'twere life or death if he should miss
A single cackle, crow or quack, or hiss
Of cockadoodling fools . . .
A week ago
He'd sat beside her bed; and heard her low
Dear voice talk softly of her hopes and fears—
Their hopes and fears; and every afternoon
He'd watched her lying there . . .
A fat buffoon
In crimson trousers prancing—strut and cluck—

Cackling: "A fellow never knows his luck—
He never knows his luck—he never knows
His luck." . . . And in and out the old gag goes
Of either ear, and in and out again,
Playing at "You-can't-catch-me" through his brain:
" 'Er knows his luck." . . .
How well they thought they knew
Their luck, and such a short while since—they two
Together. Life was lucky: and 'twas good
Then, to be fiddling for a livelihood—
His livelihood and hers . . .
A woman sang
With grinning teeth. The whole house rocked and rang.
In the whole house there was no empty place:
And there were grinning teeth in every face
Of all those faces, grinning, tier on tier,
From orchestra to ceiling chandelier
That caught in every prism a grinning light,
As from the little black box up a height
The changing limelight streamed down on the stage.
And he was filled with reasonless, dull rage
To see those grinning teeth, those grinning rows;
And wondered if those lips would never close,
But gape forever through an endless night,
Grinning and mowing in the green limelight.

And now they seemed to grin in mockery
Of him; and then, as he turned suddenly

To face them, flaming, it was his own face
That mowed and grinned at him from every place—
Grimacing on him with the set, white grin
Of his own misery through that dazzling din . . .
Yet all the while he hadn't raised his head,
But fiddled, fiddled for his daily bread,
His livelihood—no longer hers . . .

And now
He heard no more the racket and the row,
Nor saw the aching, glittering glare, nor smelt
The smother of hot breaths and smoke—but felt
A wet wind on his face . . .

He sails again
Home with her up the river in the rain—
Leaving the gray domes and gray colonnades
Of Greenwich in their wake as daylight fades—
By huge dark cavernous wharves with flaring lights,
Warehouses built for some mad London night's
Fantastic entertainment: grimmer far
Than Bagdad dreamt of—monstrous and bizarre,
They loom against the night; and seem to hold
Preposterous secrets, horrible and old,
Behind black doors and windows.

Yet even they
Make magic with more mystery the way,
As, hand in hand, they sail through the blue gloam
Up the old river of enchantment, home . . .

He heard strange, strangled voices—he, alone
Once more—like voices through the telephone,
Thin and unreal, inarticulate,
Twanging and clucking at terrific rate—
Pattering, pattering . . .
And again aware
He grew of all the racket and the glare,
Aware again of the antic strut and cluck—
And there was poor old "Never-know-his-luck"
Doing another turn—yet not a smile,
Although he'd changed his trousers and his style.
The same old trousers and the same old wheeze
Was what the audience liked. He tried to please,
And knew he failed: and suddenly turned old
Before those circling faces glum and cold—
A fat old man with cracked voice piping thin,
Trying to make those wooden faces grin,
With franctic kicks and desperate wagging head
To win the applause that meant his daily bread—
Gagging and prancing for a livelihood,
His daily bread . . .
God! how he understood!
He'd fiddled for their livelihood—for her
And for the one who never came . . .
A stir
Upon the stage; and now another turn—
The old star guttered out, too old to burn.

And he remembered she had liked the chap
When she'd been there that night. He'd seen her clap,
Laughing so merrily. She liked it all—
The razzle-dazzle of the music-hall—
And laughing faces . . . said she liked to see
Hardworking people laughing heartily
After the day's work. She liked everything—
His playing even! Snap . . . another string—
The third!

And she'd been happy in that place,
Seeing a friendly face in every face.
That was her way—the whole world was her friend.
And she'd been happy, happy to the end,
As happy as the day was long.

And he
Fiddled on, dreaming of her quietly.

Wilfrid Wilson Gibson

COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

THE SHAKESPEAREAN MOTIVE

APROPOS of the statuesquely beautiful Hamlet of Sir Johnstone Forbes-Robertson, a few of us were discussing recently the Shakespearean motive. The littleness of man, his inadequacy, his inefficiency—this seems to have haunted Shakespeare's imagination. Man's impotence to will, to do, to achieve, in spite of intellect, beauty charm, goodness, in spite of all qualities which should make him powerful—the poet is haunted by this theme; he rings the changes on it in all the great tragedies, and pursues it in many of the comedies. Apparently he searched history and human life in vain, as Nietzsche did, for the throned and sceptred figure of the man of power. Not finding him in either Plutarch or Holinshed, or among Queen Elizabeth's courtiers and freebooters, he presented again and again, as the supreme tragedy of life, the pathetic figure of the weak man in a great place. Power unused, or inadequately or criminally used, was the universal spectacle on a chance-blown planet, the one central cause of all our woe, for Shakespeare as for Nietzsche. But the German poet-prophet, living after Darwin, would not despair of his hero. Non-existent today, the man of power might yet be evolved. So he set up, before the mind's eye of the struggling race, that ideal of the super-man which has already thrilled his people like

some ichor from the table of dead war-gods, and sent them forth to conquer the world.

Apparently Shakespeare did not believe that the race could ever produce the efficient man—for him it was not in the stars. Again and again he balks at the hero: he turns his back on Edward III and his warrior son, and makes of Henry V a picturesque stage monarch, a royal bravo with a Prince-Hal past, created as an attempt to satisfy the red-blood British patriotism of his day; and his Caesar is a pitiful weakling who gives the lie to history, and proves the poet's lack of faith in man's power to play a god-like role.

With what infinite variety, what deep tenderness of love and pity, Shakespeare studied human inadequacy, revealed human littleness, almost any of the plays may bear witness. But his favorite version of the theme, as pre-eminently in *Hamlet*, is the man on a throne, or near it, who cannot answer the summons of ironic destiny to be a leader, a ruler; the man who can see all around a deed, divining motives and consequences, yet who is powerless to prepare it and do it, powerless to act except on impulse. Again and again he found this inadequate king in Holinshed and the other chroniclers: in John, Richard III, Henry IV, Henry VIII, he read him as the half-great, foiled by his own lusts or ambitions, his muddled thought or misty vision; in Henry VI he was the well-meaning self-baffled theorist, motionless on a tumbling throne; and in Richard II he was the artist, the poet, absorbed in creating a refuge of beauty away from the mud-stained, blood-splashed world.

No doubt Mr. Frank Harris is right in thinking that Shakespeare was studying himself in his over-intellectualized, weak-willed heroes, though he rides his hobby to death when he argues that because Lear is mad the poet must himself have suffered insanity. His own inadequacy for action—this was the tragedy Shakespeare knew best, the tragedy which, in the *Sonnets,* humiliates him to the dust and poisons his pride of intellect. His imagination, searching the crowd, and history and legend as well, for his own kind, as we all do, found self-foiled lovers, dreamers, seers, in Richard II, Macbeth, Antony, Hamlet, Lear, as well as in a host of lesser characters, from Orsino to Prospero.

And he was merciless with himself; for, having probed to the secret source of his own inefficiency, he set it on a throne for all to see. He placed it where immediate and decisive action was continually required as the final fruit of noble and developed character, and showed how, without that, all subtlety of thought, fire of passion, desire of beauty, intuition of truth, became the source of chaos and confusion, and ended in blood and ashes.

Usually the poet drives his lesson home, at the end of the play, by leaving lesser men, second-rate in everything but will, to obliterate the hideous waste of life and restore the order of the world—as when Fortinbras takes the dead Hamlet's throne. Apparently he set a higher value on this power of action, which he had not, than on all the dreams and visions of his poet-heroes—their audacity of intellect, their unfailing

beauty of speech, their tenderness and loving kindness, their heroic desires and ideals.

The weak man in a great place—the tragedy is re-enacted every day. If John D. Rockefeller, Jr., had been an all-round adequate man of action, would the Colorado strike situation have dragged along through weeks of horror? If William of Germany were more the king and less the stage-player at kingcraft, would Europe be at war today?

H. M.

MISS LOWELL'S DISCOVERY: POLYPHONIC PROSE

During the past year something has happened in the sphere of the arts quite as important, in my opinion, as the European war in the sphere of politics and international relationships, or the discovery of radium in that of science. A new poetic form, equal if not superior in value to *vers libre,* has made its appearance in English. The discoverer is a woman. Had it been a man, we should probably all have heard by now of the richness of the find. Since there seems to be some danger that only a few will appreciate its significance, I venture to draw the public attention to it.

I do this the more willingly, because in her preface to *Sword-blades and Poppy Seed* Miss Amy Lowell, who is the true discoverer of this form, has modestly and mistakenly stated that it is not altogether her own invention, but was first employed by a French poet, Paul Fort. Now, for the uninitiated, I may say that M. Fort is a poet who possesses great facility in writing the alexandrine, the French

classic metre. Unsatisfied with the chill regularity of this measure, he has attempted to fit it to his temperament, which is that of an improvisatore or ballad-singer, by interspersing his poems with bits of prose, whenever his rhyme-invention flags. He thus gains a lightness, swiftness, and spontaneity of effect which have made him extremely popular among younger French poets. This popularity might have been greater had M. Fort printed his work as poetry interspersed with prose. Instead, he has chosen to print it as if it were prose alone, leaving the reader to determine the movement of the rhythm and the division into lines.

Upon this purely typographical device in M. Fort, Miss Lowell's imagination fastened itself. She is almost unique among present-day poets in possessing the ability of writing equally well in rhymed metre and in *vers libre*. She has practiced her art long enough to understand that the really great poetry which will survive, depends upon its sound quality and its substance quality, upon its appeal to the ear as well as to the eye. It seemed to her that there must be some way of fusing together unrhymed *vers libre* and rhymed metrical patterns, giving the rich decorative quality of the one and the powerful conciseness of statement of the other. In short, she was seeking some means whereby she might free herself, and other poets after her, from a constant and dogmatic adherence to a single metre throughout a single poem. In this respect, she was acting as the successor of Coleridge, Keats, Poe, who spent their lives trying to make English metre more flexible to

mood and richer in sound effect. In M. Fort's work she found a gleam of suggestion to this end.

Miss Lowell had scarcely begun her attempt to follow Paul Fort before she realized that what she was doing consisted not so much in adapting a French form as in creating a new English one. For one thing, she was faced at the outset by the fact that the English language, since the break-up of blank verse, has no form which is standard, like the French alexandrine. She found it possible to vary the rhythm and metre of these strange new poems of hers almost at will, following the inner emotion of the thing she had to say. Swift-flowing metrical passages might be succeeded by *vers libre* recitatives; connecting links of prose could be used as a relief to the ear, and to lead up to some new metrical passage, and so on. In short, here was the opportunity, long sought, of displaying, within the limits of a single poem, all the resources of her art.

In my opinion, Miss Lowell has, in her latest examples of this peculiar form, resolved in a great measure the difficulties which confront all English poets who attempt to say something new today. The quandary which faces the earnest creator of poetry in the English-speaking countries is, that while he has at his disposal in the English language, the most superb instrument of sense and sound ever forged, he is utterly prevented from making use of its resources by the beggarly poverty of certain rhymes and metres which have been worn threadbare by generation after generation of poets, who could find no satisfying means of escape from them. What hope,

then, is there for the young poet who feels he has a new music to express, when the only recognized means of expressing it has been developed to its utmost capacity over three hundred years ago? He is like a man who would try to play Richard Strauss or Debussy, or any of the modern composers, on a harpsichord.

It is true that a few brave young spirits have tried to face this difficulty and to rid themselves of it by writing exclusively in an old form called *vers libre,* which is dependent on cadence, and not on rhyme or metrical pattern. But a critical examination of the work of the best of these young poets—Aldington, H. D., Flint, Pound—proves that their attempt has not been altogether successful. The art of poetry demands as great a mastery of sound-quality as of substance-quality. Intense and concise grasp of substance is not enough; the ear instinctively demands that this bare skeleton be clothed fittingly with all the beautiful and subtle orchestral qualities of assonance, alliteration, rhyme, and return.

This orchestral quality Miss Lowell has developed to the utmost. Therefore it seems fitting that a new name should be given to these poems of hers, which, printed as prose, or as prose and verse interspersed, display all the colors of the chromatic palette. The title that fits them best is that of Polyphonic Prose. Here are the Beethoven symphonies, the Bach fugues, the César Franck chorales, of poetry. It is an art most difficult of attainment, and not easy of appreciation. But it has come to English poetry, and its effect will be lasting and unmistakable.

Toscanelli drew a chart, but it needed a Columbus to make the voyage. Just so, Miss Lowell, with happy and characteristic daring, has essayed her voyage, and has found a new poetic continent in place of M. Fort's France, to which she at first thought she was steering. It is the old story of Whistler and the Japanese print over again. While a few connoisseurs scarcely dared to admire Japanese prints in secret, Whistler boldly made them the basis of a new art. Some day people will probably be saying that Miss Lowell was quite as important a figure for American art as Whistler. That is always America's little way of doing things. While Europe is jawing, and the American public remains supremely indifferent, some cheeky Yankee goes out and gets a thing done without anyone taking notice.

John Gould Fletcher

REVIEWS

Arrows in the Gale, by Arturo Giovannitti: *Introduction* by Helen Keller. Hillacre Bookhouse, Riverside, Conn.

We Anglo-Saxon Americans are only vaguely aware that the nation so firmly founded on Plymouth Rock is slipping off that ancestral vantage-ground as surely in race as in creed. And still more vaguely do we appreciate the insidious advance of various European—even oriental—cultures, or kulturs, upon the stronghold of our inherited English traditions. How long will it be before some Garibaldi, or Kosciusko, or Epaminondas, ascends the chair of Washington and Lincoln

to remind us that the melting-pot has made us over into the most cosmopolitan nation in the world?

It may be that the future of the arts in America is in the hands of these immigrants and their variously intermarrying children; that they will endow us with that quick expressiveness, that enthusiasm for beauty, that warmth of passion, which have been chilled out of Angle-Saxon blood by ten centuries or more of British fog. Already we are reminded often of the impending change: by the fiery eloquence of some proletarian orator tearing the constitution to tatters, by the demoniac rhythms of certain figures modelled by a fierce young Slavic sculptor, by a burning poem sent to POETRY from a Syrian student of Columbia, or by this white-hot book of visions from the young Italian I. W. W. "agitator."

They are indeed agitating to the comfortable conservative, these visions. Such an one, seeking the solace of poetry beside his warm fire after a good dinner, will perhaps read no further than these lines of the *Proem:*

> All that you worship, fear and trust
> I kick into the sewer's maw,
> And fling my shaft and my disgust
> Against your gospel and your law.

He would better read on, however, and then desert peaceful hearth and loaded table and go forth into the bitter world with this poet, this lover and hater of men. He would go to court and prison with him, he would sit with him all night on a Mulberry Park bench, he would look with him through a window at milady feeding her dog while a little newsboy starves in the storm, he would hear him preaching a

Sermon on the Common and singing *The Last Oracle;* and always he would find himself in contact with a fiery spirit, whose poetry, as Miss Helen Keller says in her *Introduction,* "is the spiritualization of a lofty dream that he seeks to realize —the establishment of love and brotherhood and social justice for every man and woman upon earth."

In the presentation of his vision Mr. Giovannitti is fettered by the ordinary verse forms, while in the broader cadences of metrical prose he has plenty of room for his vivid imagery, and sets it forth, sometimes, with a magnificent gesture. One would scarcely know where to look for a nobler modern structure of wrath and despair than he builds up in *The Walker:*

> Yet fearsome and terrible are all the footsteps of men upon the earth, for they either descend or climb.
> They descend and they climb, the fearful footsteps of men, and some limp, some drag, some speed, some trot, some run—they are quiet, slow, noisy, brisk, quick feverish, mad; and most awful is their cadence to the ears of the one who stands still.
> But of all the footsteps of men that either descend or climb, no footsteps are so fearsome and terrible as those that go straight on the dead level of a prison floor, from a yellow stone wall to a red iron gate.

In *The Cage* the play of imagery is phosphorescent in its richness of color and quickness of movement. *The Sermon on the Common* is less poetic, more preachy, *The Last Nickel* is more conscious and labored, and *Out of the Mouth of Babes* is more melodramatic, though all burn with the same passion. But in *The Walker* and *The Cage* the passion is fused to white-hot purity and beaten into beautiful forms of power.

H. M.

Sonnets of a Portrait Painter, by Arthur Davison Ficke. Kennerley.

Mr. Ficke is a brilliant sonnetteer—it goes without saying that in this sequence of fifty-seven Shakespearean sonnets he has presented as many episodes of a love-story with technical precision and eloquent richness of phrase. Therefore, if we admit his ardor and his workmanlike skill, and yet attempt a closer analysis, it is in an effort to find out why this adept art is not wholly satisfying.

In the first place, it shows a certain monotony of rhythmical pattern. These sonnets all move too much alike, with the same *tempo,* line units, pauses, etc. Read any group of them aloud, and then any group of Shakespeare's sonnets, and you will be struck anew with the variety of cadence, phrasing and *tempo* in the latter. This may seem an unfair comparison, but on the contrary it is a compliment to find a young poet worthy of reminders from the masters. Perhaps, Mr. Ficke writes too rapidly, does not wait to be haunted for days and days by magic rhythms.

Another exception is to his diction—it is not simple enough, not true to modern speech. What Elizabethan ghost gave him such lines as these?—

> Strange! to remember that I late was fain
> To yield death back my poor undated lease—
>
> Of mid-night argent mad moon-archery—
>
> Nay, all our longing compassed not such hope,
> Nor did we in our flame-shot passagings,

> Push the horizon of our visions' scope
> To regions of these far entangled things.

He even says, "my rival—faugh!" "my soul's swift powers", "I yearned in vain", and other stock phrases of melodrama; and in general he chooses too often the so-called "poetic" phrase, instead of the simplest possible form of modern speech which will hold his meaning.

If we point out these difficulties, it is in the way of friendly warning to a poet far too richly endowed to permit himself any carelessness. He is tempted by his own facility, by his love of rich and honied words, of storied beauty and romance.

Yet, after all, there are sonnets in this series which move proudly in their knightly robes. One of the finest is the tenth:

> Come forth; for Spring is singing in the boughs
> Of every white and tremulous apple-tree.
> This is the season of eternal vows;
> Yet what are vows that they should solace me?
> For on the winds wild loveliness is crying,
> And in all flowers wild joy its present worth
> Proclaims, as from the dying to the dying—
> "Seize, clasp thy hour of sun upon the earth!"
> Oh, never dream that fire or beauty stays
> More than one April moment in its flight
> Toward regions where the sea-drift of all days
> Sinks in a vast, desireless, lonely night.
> Away with eternal vows!—and give me breath
> Of one white hour here on the marge of death!

H. M.

Children of Love, by Harold Monro. The Poetry Bookshop, London.

The Poetry Bookshop is tempting the war-absorbed public with thin sheafs of verse ranging in price from twopence to sixpence—*Chap-books, Broadsides, Garlands:* sheafs so well printed and made up as to make the American publisher envious of British prices for paper, composition, etc. Mr. Monro's thirty-page pamphlet is one of these.

If this sheaf is a garland, it is winter gathered. Its mood makes me think of a garden near Yokohama which I once visited in December, for a mournful beauty pervades it, and it is swept by the futile winds of war.

To what end? of what use? whom do we follow? where do we go?—these and other dark questions wander like ghosts in this poet's brain.

> To what God
> Shall we chant
> Our songs of battle?

he cries: and as he watches the soldier carelessly drinking his stirrup-cup, he tries in vain to beat thought back:

> Every syllable said
> Brings you nearer the time you'll be found lying dead
> In a ditch, or rolled stiff on the stones of a plain.
> (Thought! Thought, go back into your kennel again:
> Hound, back!) Drink your glass, happy soldier, tonight.
> Death is quick; you will laugh as you march to the fight.
> We are wrong. Dreaming ever, we falter and pause:
> You go forward unharmed without Why or Because.

And it is no king's gleeman leading the hosts to battle who thus contemplates *Youth in Arms:*

Happy boy, happy boy,
David the immortal-willed,
Youth a thousand thousand times
Slain, but not once killed,
Swaggering again today
In the old contemptuous way;

Leaning backward from your thigh
Up against the tinselled bar—
Dust and ashes! is it you?
Laughing, boasting, there you are!
First we hardly recognized you
In your modern avatar.

Soldier, rifle, brown khaki—
Is your blood as happy so?
Where's your sling or painted shield,
Helmet, pike or bow?
Well, you're going to the wars—
That is all you need to know.

Graybeards plotted. They were sad.
Death was in their wrinkled eyes.
At their tables—with their maps,
Plans and calculations—wise
They all seemed; for well they knew
How ungrudgingly Youth dies.

Mr. Monro paints vivid pictures of war in *Retreat* and *Carrion*, and of drabbest Britain in *London Interior, Suburb* and *Appointment*. In *Great City* one discovers a gleam, and *A Strange Companion* is a weird vision of dark sympathies between the two selves in a man's soul.

If this poet sees little light ahead, at least he does not shrink from the gloom. *H. M.*

Ernest Dowson, by Victor Plarr. Elkin Mathews.

This is a most charming monograph. The first chapters are perhaps the best account of Ernest Dowson that has been written, or that will be written for that matter, since no one else will have known the younger Dowson so well, or will care so much about doing him justice. Symons wrote as an artist, Victor Plarr writes as a friend. And the book is worthy of Plarr as one finds him in the *Epitaphium Citharistriae* and in his half-forgotten book *The Dorian Mood.*

Perhaps he does not give "the whole Dowson," but at least he presents the phase of Dowson that some other writers have neglected. I have never been disappointed in a man whose work had first drawn me to him. I think, perhaps, the best praise we can give to a memoir of an author is to say that it "goes with his work"; that it leaves us with an impression of the man as we had found him already in his writings.

Certain people would rather think of Dowson in cabmen's shelters, or squabbling with drunken fishermen in Dieppe and the Breton towns. Certain people will rather remember the beautiful story of the French magistrate who had condemned Dowson for assaulting the local baker. Someone rushed into the court protesting that Dowson was a distinguished writer. "What, what, Monsieur Dowson, a distinguished English litterateur! Release M. Dowson—at once! Imprison the baker."

It may be myth, but it is also literature. It shows that in at least one country the arts are, or were, held in respect.

Some will resent what they will call Mr. Plarr's attempt to make Dowson more acceptable to people who live in three-story houses instead of in chambers and attics. They will say that even the gospels would lose a great deal of their force were their hero not represented with a taste for bohemian company.

Mr. Plarr has perhaps met people who regard Dowson with undue severity, and to correct their view he has written the charming first half of his book. For this he was the ideal biographer, not only because of friendship but because of a tradition which leaves him able clearly to objectify his friend while losing none of his sympathy: Dowson, a young Englishman enamoured of many things French; the young Plarr an Alsatian, half a refugee from the war of '70, a survivor of the senatorial families of Strasburg whose tradition is, *"On porte sa bourgeoisie comme un marquisat."*

The memoir of this friendship is charming. It is of the days before the shadow, and perhaps Mr. Plarr is right, perhaps some writers have borne too heavily on the supposed luridity of Dowson's career, which was in all truth pastoral enough, a delicate temperament that ran a little amuck toward the end, an irregular man with nothing a sane man would call vices. At any rate Mr. Plarr dwells with some emphasis on the rarer, more delicate man, the man as he must have been really in order to write his verses. Some also will disagree with Mr. Plarr's judgment that the earlier poems are the best. The posthumous *Decorations* contains *De Amore*, the *Wine and Women and Song* villanelle, *Dregs* and

Let us go hence. One can not say that these poems show any decline of power, though perhaps, if one read as a friend and not as a stranger, one would find their sorrow too great.

In any case no one who loves his Dowson will go without this memoir, this book which is in part his own letters gathered by that friend of his youth to whom they were written.

E. P.

Crack o' Dawn, by Fannie Stearns Davis (Mrs. A. McK. Gifford). Macmillan.

This poet walks on the hills, loves the wind, and feels the eerieness of life. One discerns a fine free spirit in her, and now and then one hears a flute-like voice of singular sweetness and purity. But we begin to feel, in many of these poems, a certain straining of the note; we hear the same motive over and over, and detect a holding-on to naive childlikeness.

Of course I shall be reminded that the poet is lost indeed who loses his childlike freshness of vision. But this does not interfere with a poet's growing up when he comes to years of maturity, and facing life with an adult mind. Mrs. Gifford should be taken off her windy New England hills, should be racked and torn by the more searching winds of experience. At present her poetry needs enrichment—it is all up in the air. There is aspiration in this book, fancy, a wistful sense of wonder, but no reality, no rooted, growing, breathing passion of life.

Indeed, the poet confesses all this with engaging frankness in poems like *What if I Grow Old and Gray,* which

sees no life beyond youth; or *Restlessness,* in which "nothing life says comes clear," or this lovely one, *Escape:*

> Now since I cannot make it out—
> Why people love and lose and die;
> Why there is agony and doubt,
> And so much cause to brood and cry:
>
> Oh, since I cannot understand
> God's will for all the world, and me—
> I will go take the wind's cold hand
> And dance a little, foolishly.

We like also *The New House, The Unborn, The Storm Dance, Profits, As I Drank Tea Today,* and others, most of which strike wistfully the same note. *H. M.*

Songs of the Outlands, Ballads of the Hoboes, and Other Verse, by Henry Herbert Knibbs. Houghton-Mifflin Co.

The duly sophisticated critic may dispose of this book by labeling it Bret-Hartish or Kiplingesque. But this critic, who has listened to cow-boy yarns on the way to the Snake-dance, and to whom Arizona is a word of magic, finds in it the authentic free-range spirit, the authentic cow-boy cadence. It is, in short, the best verse of its kind which has been written in this century, or perhaps since Bret Harte himself.

Some of these ballads and lyrics of rangers and hoboes are too good to perish. I should say that *Out There Somewhere, Sunshine Over Yuma, Oliver West,* and the three hobo monologues—*The Sheep and the Goats, Ballade of the Boes* and *Along the Shore,* will surely be a part of that final small collection of dialect poems immortalizing the spirit of

our frontier life through a romantic period. They are masterpieces of familiar modern balladry—we wish we had space to quote them. *H. M.*

Bread and Circuses, by Helen Parry Eden. John Lane.

This is a book of engaging light verse, which might be recommended safely to those two fellow-citizens, Eugene Field, of happy memory, and our present autocrat of the breakfast-table, Bert Leston Taylor. Like these two, this poet is not only a deft weaver of gay rhymes but something more. She has their gift of making friends for us, of presenting live people in her poems; and, like them and certain greater poets, she can say, now and then, grave things with a smile.

New Poems, by Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Browning. Edited by Sir Frederick G. Kenyon. With two portraits. Macmillan.

It may be questioned whether the last rags of verse, wisely discarded by the living poet, should be published to encumber the works of the dead. Yet, as few editors have the discretion, or indeed the power, to burn them, perhaps only the poet is to blame for not doing so himself. It becomes the duty of erudition to take note of them, and new editions of *Collected Works* must be published to include them.

Most of these thirty-five poems and fragments were found among the papers of the late Robert Barrett Browning after his death, and, with other manuscripts and effects of the two poets, were sold by auction in London in May, 1913.

H. M.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE NEW BEAUTY

Dear Editor: I can but stand in bewilderment before the vast knowledge of Mr. Ezra Pound. Did ever Hindu, Chinaman, Brobdignagian, or Lilliputian, crook a finger at the muse, but straight some wireless has brought the message for final judgment to his study table? He is full of fust and ferment against those who are at ease in Zion. He is the apostle of discontent—I should say pope, infallible.

Does he not know that the same spirit of unrest, discontent, the same fust and ferment, was in the veins of Milton, driving him to Italy; of Wordsworth, driving him into the maelstrom of the French Revolution; of Tennyson, driving him over the Pyrenees on foot to get his heart cooled off? He thinks it the New Beauty; but it is in the veins of every colt that is turned loose in the paddock on a bright, frosty morning.

He might possibly remind me, could he become in any most distant way aware of me at all, that there is to be a new heaven and a new earth; and he might proceed to show that he is now building the new heaven and the new earth. But all new heavens and new earths—and there have been millions of them—are, like every new growth of the coral islands, simply rising out of and upon the old beauty, and the new beauty never shakes itself loose from the old.

"The kingdom of God cometh not by observation." "Canst thou by searching find out God?"

I am provoked, not because Mr. Pound approves of those who fill us with discontent. I myself indulge in discontent, but I also believe in modesty in criticism. And I am not guarding the clothes of those who stone Milton, nor am I consenting unto his death.

Mr. Pound souses that "acquaintance" of his into eternal limbo, because he "deliberately says that mediocre poetry is worth writing." Without a vast field of mediocre poetry, we could have no literature. Mediocre poetry is the compost heap on which grow Shakespeares.

"Milton is the worst of poison." *Damn!* There!—have I got a dab of pure color on my palette at last?

"Whitman proclaimed himself 'a start in the right direction.' He never said, 'American poetry is to stay where I left it.'" Well, in the name of common sense!—who ever wrote, expecting poetry to stay put where he left it? Will Mr. Pound's imagists stay put where he leaves them? No, my dear sir, all poetry, all criticism, will be like the North Pole —every succeeding moment it will point in a new direction through a period of twenty-two thousand years, and then begin over.

"American poetry is of no use for the palette." Still, there is a wee bit of it that I'm going to smear over my palette right now:

Wal, it's a marcy we've got folks to tell us
 The rights an' the wrongs o' these matters, I swow!—
God sends London critics an' other wise fellers
 To start the world's team, when it gits in a slough;

Fer Ezery P.—he—he—
Says the world 'll go right, when he hollers out *Gee!*

Leroy Titus Weeks

P. S. May I append these attempts at pure color?

ENTOMOLEGIACS

I—THE JIGGER

O marvel!
How came his pinkness
So snugly under the skin?
He is after pure color.
En garde!

II—THE CULEX

I wandered in Dreamland.
I saw *her* radiant form Transfigured.
Something had hummed in my ear
And made me dream.
Then bit me!
I sent her my dream!

TOMMY ROT

A weaver sits at court.
He has
A
Wonderful loom,
With fruit of pure color.

None but the initiated may see the web?

The Queen
And her maids of honor
Stand about and praise:
"The New Beauty!
Behold!
Old things are p a s s e d a w a y,
And

All things
Are become new!"

The courtiers
Tumble over themselves
To get to it.
"Wonderful!
Wonderful!
Wonderful!"

Huh!
I can't see any web.
There isn't any.
But there is a mighty rattling of the loom!

I whip out my rapier, and slash the magic web.
The jig is up. *L. T. W.*

A WORD FROM THE DIAL

Dear Madam: In your March issue, in a report of an "editors' night" at the Book and Play Club, I find it stated that "the editor of *The Dial* admitted his aversion from its conventionality"; and also that *The Dial*, along with other Chicago periodicals, "confessed bitter struggles to keep above water." I trust you will consider it only courteous to state in your next issue that the editor of *The Dial*, who happens to be the present writer, did *not* attend the meeting referred to, and so could not have made either the admission or the confession quoted above. Faithfully yours,

Waldo R. Browne.

NOTE. Mr. Lucian Cary, who represented *The Dial* on the occasion referred to, was then associate editor, and he is no longer connected with the paper. The editor of POETRY regrets the unintended injustice to Mr. Browne.

MISS LOWELL NOT THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:—In one of your notes under *Our Contemporaries*, in the March number, you spoke of me as the editor of the little volume, *Some Imagist Poets*, to be published in Houghton Mifflin's *New Poetry Series*. I am not the editor of that volume. There is no editor, as is carefully stated in the preface. Each poet was the arbiter of his own verses, and the poets have been put alphabetically in order that no possible sort of preference might be suggested. My only function has been to see the volume through the press, as being the one of the group nearest the publishers. I realize perfectly that your note was written under a misconception, but knowing your anxiety for fair play, I beg you to publish this letter. Sincerely yours,

Amy Lowell.

NOTES

Mr. Witter Bynner, of New York and Cornish, will soon bring out in book form *The New World*, from which our four episodes are taken. His latest publication is *The Little King*, a play in verse about Louis XVII.

Mr. Ridgely Torrence, of Ohio and New York, has written of late a number of plays of negro life. One of these, *Granny Maumee*, a two-act tragedy, was given last year in New York by Miss Dorothy Donnelley.

Mr. Padraic Colum is a well known young Irish poet who is now making a lecture tour in this country.

Miss Amy Lowell, of Boston, is well known to readers of POETRY. Also Mr. Charles Hanson Towne, of New York, who will soon publish a new book of verse. Also the English poets, Mr. Wilfrid Wilson Gibson, author of *Borderlands and Thoroughfares* (Macmillan); and Mr. Rupert Brooke, who is now in training to go to the war.

Mr. E. Preston Dargan, a young poet who has not net published a volume, is a member of the faculty of the University of Chicago. Miss Rita Benton is also a young Chicagoan.

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DRYPOINTS

RUE BONAPARTE

YOU that but seek your modest rolls and coffee,
When you have passed the bar, and have saluted
Its watchful madam, then pray enter softly
The inner chamber, even as one who treads
The haunts of mating birds, and watch discreetly
Over your paper's edge. There in the corner,
Obscure, ensconced behind the uncovered table,
A man and woman keep their silent tryst.
Outside the morning floods the pavement sweetly;
Yonder aloft a maid throws back the shutters;
The hucksters utter modulated cries
As wistful as some old pathetic ballad.
Within, the brooding lovers, unaware,

Sit quiet hand in hand, or in low whispers
Communicate a more articulate love.
Sometimes she plays with strings and, gently leaning
Against his shoulder, shows him childish tricks.
She has not touched the glass of milk before her,
Her breakfast and the price of their admittance.
She has a look devoted and confiding
And might be pretty were not life so hard.
But he, gaunt as his rusty bicycle
That stands against the table, and with features
So drawn and stark, has only futile strength.
The love they cherish in this stolen meeting
Through all the day that follows makes her sweeter,
And him perhaps it only leaves more bitter.
But you that have not love at all, old men
That warm your fingers by this fire, discreetly
Play out your morning game of dominoes.

THE VIEW AT GUNDERSON'S

Sitting in his rocker waiting for your tea,
Gazing from his window, this is what you see:

A cat that snaps at flies; a track leading down
By log-built shanties gray and brown;

The corner of a barn, and tangled lines of fence
Of rough-hewn pickets standing dense;

The ghost of a tree on a dull, wet day;
And the blanket fog where lies the bay.

But when he's seen the last of you,
Sitting in his rocker, what's *his* view?

(For there he sits, day in day out,
Nursing his leg—and his dreams, no doubt.)

The snow-slide up behind the *gaard;*
The farm beside old Trondjem *fjord;*

Daughters seven with their cold blue eyes,
And the great pine where his father lies;

The boat that brought him over the sea;
And the toothless woman who makes his tea.

(Their picture, framed on the rough log wall,
Proves she had teeth when he was tall.)

He sees the balsam thick on the hill,
And all he's cleared with a stubborn will.

And last he sees the full-grown son
For whom he hoards what he has won.

You saw little worth the strife:
What he sees is one man's life.

ICU

THE MASSEUR

In a chamber choked with shadows
 The dim light overhead
Reveals a ghostly figure
 Bent down above my bed;
A figure dim and priestly,
 Soft-footed and discreet,
With sacramental beard and eyes
 Above his winding sheet.

His eyes are close and narrow
 And shaded from the light,
But something strange and eerie
 Yet glitters to my sight.
His voice is soft and toneless,
 With a hint of faraway
Uncanny resonances heard
 Beyond our night and day.

His fingers strong and skilful,
 That follow every curve,
Wake quivers of sensation
 In each remotest nerve.
And ever, as he passes
 His palms along my skin,
He goes on speaking grave and still
 Of Satan and of sin.

And out of the prophet Daniel
 And out of John the seer,
He proves the Second Coming
 And how it draweth near.
He strips the scarlet woman
 And lays the dragon bare,
And shows me Armageddon red
 About us everywhere.

.

His voice grows faint and fainter.
 His face I cannot see.
A flush of warmth and drowsiness
 Flows up and covers me.
My waking soul goes under
 In gradual eclipse . . .
I sleep, and dream of judgment day
 And dread Apocalypse.

THE POINT OF VIEW

I overtook her on the bridge
 Loitering in the morning gray,
And straight she told me all her heart
 In her direct and childish way.

"Helen was sick for long," she said,
 And slipped a trustful hand in mine.

"She never had to go to school,
And she had oranges . . . and wine! . . .

"When Helen died, you should have seen
The flowers, so many and so bright—
Red roses all about her face . . .
And Helen's face so very white!"

JENNY'S DANCING

When Jenny danced with Janet,
I saw two silver birches swaying
To a breeze that left the hillside quiet,
Save for these white stems
It singled out
To set them tossing.

I saw two flames,
Two slim and volatile
Twin flames wind-blown,
That wound and wound
Their delicate bodies
To a tune no ear could follow . . .

And then came Rupert—
Hapless male! —
And he took Jenny.

He could not follow the tune—
The breeze passed by him;
And as he could not bend himself,
He broke her.

CAVE TALK

What are you doing there by the shore?

—I'm pushing out my boat.
I mean to follow the sun across
To islands far remote.
It may be I shall find a land
Where fruits and spices grow;
Fairer women, stronger men,
And mountains topped with snow.

—Nay, go not forth across the wave,
Where ghosts and monsters be.
What fairer folk can heart desire
Than my sweet cubs and me?
And who shall bring us fish and flesh
When you are gone away?
Come, spread the net and string the bow—
But fare not far astray!

What are you scratching there on the rock?

—I'm carving pictures here—
Feathered bird and otter furred,
To bide for many a year.
When a thousand moons have waxed and waned
And I am dust and smoke,
Men shall behold my handiwork
And praise the master-stroke.

—O sluggard, leave your idle ways—
Behold our bitter dearth!
We shiver in the frosty wind
And couch upon the earth.
Go, strip the otter and her cubs
For coats and kirtles fine,
And pluck the feathered bird to strew
A bed for me and mine.

What are you doing out in the dark?

—I count the stars in the sky,
And wonder if they are the souls
Of such as you and I;
And if the bear and the lean gray wolf
Have souls like yours and mine,
That go to feed the milky way
Or make the great stars shine.

—O dreamer, what are the stars to you
And the souls of wolf and bear?

The gray wolf prowls about the rock
 And sniffs upon the air;
His eyes are shining in the dark
 Like stars above the sea!
Build high the fire before the cave
 To guard my cubs and me.

What do you see that stare so hard?

 —A face all smooth and white,
And breasts and shoulders smooth and round
 And soft in the flickering light.
I muse how wondrous women are
 And how unlike to men . . .
I saw white arms in the sea at dawn . . .
 Long since . . . and never again . . .

—You love me not, O stranger man,
 Who talk of women and men,
Of white arms in the sea at dawn . . .
 You love me never again!
You sit and dream the while I wait—
 And the little ones all asleep . . .
Oh, if you love me a little, man,
 Kiss me . . . or I shall weep!

Joseph Warren Beach

ROOT BUDS

THE SHADOW

Soft as the bed in the earth
Where a stone has lain—
So soft, so smooth and so cool,
Spring closes me in
With her arms and her hands.

Rich as the smell
Of new earth on a stone,
That has lain, breathing
The damp through its pores—
Spring closes me in
With her blossomy hair;
Brings dark to my eyes.

METRIC FIGURE

There is a bird in the poplars—
It is the sun!
The leaves are little yellow fish
Swimming in the river;
The bird skims above them—
Day is on his wings.
Phoenix!
It is he that is making

The great gleam among the poplars.
It is his singing
Outshines the noise
Of leaves clashing in the wind.

SUB TERRA

Where shall I find you—
You, my grotesque fellows
That I seek everywhere
To make up my band?
None, not one
With the earthy tastes I require:
The burrowing pride that rises
Subtly as on a bush in May.

Where are you this day—
You, my seven-year locusts
With cased wings?
Ah, my beauties, how I long!
That harvest
That shall be your advent—
Thrusting up through the grass,
Up under the weeds,
Answering me—
That shall be satisfying!
The light shall leap and snap
That day as with a million lashes!

Oh, I have you!
Yes, you are about me in a sense,
Playing under the blue pools
That are my windows.
But they shut you out still
There in the half light—
For the simple truth is
That though I see you clear enough . . .
You are not there.

It is not that—it is you,
You I want, my companions!
God! if I could only fathom
The guts of shadows!—
You to come with me
Poking into negro houses
With their gloom and smell!
In among children
Leaping around a dead dog!
Mimicking
Onto the lawns of the rich!
You!
To go with me a-tip-toe
Head down under heaven,
Nostrils lipping the wind!

SLOW MOVEMENT

All those treasures that lie in the little bolted box whose tiny space is
Mightier than the room of the stars, being secret and filled with dreams:
All those treasures—I hold them in my hand—are straining continually
Against the sides and the lid and the two ends of the little box in which I guard them;
Crying that there is no sun come among them this great while and that they weary of shining;
Calling me to fold back the lid of the little box and to give them sleep finally.

But the night I am hiding from them, dear friend, is far more desperate than their night!
And so I take pity on them and pretend to have lost the key to the little house of my treasures,
For they would die of weariness were I to open it, and not be merely faint and sleepy
As they are now.

A CONFIDENCE

Today, dear friend, this gray day,
I have been explaining to a young man of the West Indies

How the leaves all fall from the little branches
And lie soon in crowds along the bare ground;
 How they lie
On all sides so thick that no man
May pass any way without touching them,
Or hearing at his feet a great crying-out!

 But in no way at all could I have told him
This that I tell you so easily:
How having become wise as a flame with watching
Above the year since that time he lifted
 His young face
For a moment—that time of the first passing—
They lie exultant, pressing his foot-prints,
Melting away because of their passion!

William Carlos Williams

APOLOGIA

I think I have no soul,
Having instead two hands, sensitive and curious,
And ten subtle and inquisitive fingers
Which reach out continually into the world,
Touching and handling all things.
The fascination of objects!—
The marvellous shapes!
Contours of faces and of dispositions,
Hearts that are tender or rough to the touch,
The smooth soft fabrics in which lives go clothed—
Hope and pity and passion:
All these as I touch them delight and enchant me,
And I think I could go on touching them forever.
But the impulse comes into the nerves of my fingers,
Into the muscles of my hands,
To give back this beauty in some shape
Confessional of joy.
And so I make these toys.

Floyd Dell

SONGS

INVOCATION

O glass-blower of time,
 Hast blown all shapes at thy fire?
Canst thou no lovelier bell,
 No clearer bubble, clear as delight, inflate me—
Worthy to hold such wine
 As was never yet trod from the grape,
Since the stars shed their light, since the moon
 Troubled the night with her beauty?

A VIVID GIRL

Her face is fair and smooth and fine,
Childlike, with secret laughter lit,
Drooping in pity, bright with wit,
A flower, a flame—God fashioned it.
Who sees her tastes the sacred wine.

PROVINCIAL

The Dunkard ladies ride to town
 Demure in the wagon behind their men:
Each wears a black bonnet tied under her chin,
 And a green or scarlet gown.

Provincial

I saw three stand in an awning's shade,
 Where golden fruits were in prim rows laid—
Plump girls, like rabbits, with dough-white skin.
 One sucked at a fig as at secret sin.

Half-scared, half-stolid, they eye the crowd,
 Blink at shop-windows, gape toward the sky.
A sharp Italian, chattering loud,
 Regards them—her glance is comedy!

Clara Shanafelt

POUTERS AND FANTAILS

THAT HARP YOU PLAY SO WELL

O David, if I had
Your power, I should be glad—
 In harping, with the sling,
 In patient reasoning!

Blake, Homer, Job, and you,
Have made old wine-skins new.
 Your energies have wrought
 Stout continents of thought.

But, David, if the heart
Be brass, what boots the art
 Of exorcising wrong,
 Of harping to a song?

The sceptre and the ring
And every royal thing
 Will fail. Grief's lustiness
 Must cure that harp's distress.

TO AN INTRA-MURAL RAT

You make me think of many men
Once met, to be forgot again;
 Or merely resurrected
In a parenthesis of wit,
That found them hastening through it
 Too brisk to be inspected.

COUNSEIL TO A BACHELER

Elizabethan Trencher Motto—Bodleian Library: [*with title and modification of second line*]

If thou bee younge, then marie not yett;
If thou bee olde, then no wyfe gett;
For younge mens' wyves will not bee taught,
And olde mens' wyves bee good for naught.

APPELLATE JURISDICTION

Fragments of sin are a part of me.
New brooms shall sweep clean the heart of me.
 Shall they? Shall they?

When this light life shall have passed away,
God shall redeem me, a castaway.
 Shall He? Shall He?

THE WIZARD IN WORDS

"When I am dead,"
The wizard said,
 "I'll look upon the narrow way
 And this Dante,
 And know that he was right;
 And he'll delight
 In my remorse—
 Of course."

"When I am dead,"
The student said,
 "I shall have grown so tolerant
 I'll find I can't
 Laugh at your sorry plight,
 Or take delight
 In your chagrin,
 Merlin."

Marianne Moore

THREE POEMS

CREATIVE

Renew the vision of delight
By vigil, praise and prayer,
Till every sinew leaps in might
And every sense is fair.

TWILIGHT AT VERSAILLES

Unfold for men, O God, love's true, creative day,
To flower our barren souls by mellow sun and noon:
The glory of old thought is still, and cold, and gray,
Like gardens unrenewed beneath the sterile moon.

LOVERS

Whate'er our joy compelled, men's praise and blame fall
hollow,
A voice upon the winds that drown it as they blow:
So fair a vision led, our thought was all to follow;
So strong a passion urged, our will was all to go.

Horace Holley

A SPRING SONG

Smell the sweet wind
From far woodlands—
How it comes
Blowing
Soft breezes,
Sharp breezes,
In clear pureness
From high hilltops!

Feel the wild wind
In the city streets—
How it comes
Bearing
New strongness,
Fresh gladness,
In light laughter
To a wearying world!

Hark you, free wind,
Tapping at my window
As you go
Singing
Glad songs,
Mad songs,
New love take to
Mon camarade—mon chéri!

Mabel D. Carry

THE LILACS

If you come to Catskill in the spring
You will find the lilacs blossoming.
Though a miser hold the cup,
Every vagabond may sup.
Oh, we drink the wind of spring
When the lilac's blossoming!

A VILLAGE CHURCH

There is a little church I know
With six white pillars in a row,
And for a hundred years or more
God's people have gone through the door.
A goodly company are they
Who come no more on Sabbath Day.
Sometimes I think the Sabbath air
Is filled with little ghosts of prayer,
And in the rafters linger yet
Words that the church cannot forget.
Full of old songs the belfry is,
And every pew has memories.

Louise Driscoll

THE WORLD CRY

Joy, light, and love I crave
And shall discover—
Life's wild adventure opening to my will:
High thought and brave,
The rapture of a lover,
The Vision gleaming from yon western hill.

Beyond my present sight
There lies some sweet allure,
Some crested glory waiting to be won;
Shimmering in light,
Beautiful and sure,
Beckoning bright hands that call me on.

I know not where it lies,
Nor whither I go, nor how
The way is paved—with pleasure or with pain;
But the search is in my eyes,
And the dust upon my brow
Shall turn to aureoled gold when I attain.

.

Oh, old old hope—
Unfulfilled desire!
Pitiful the faith,
Beautiful the fire!

Know, soul who criest,
Thy gleaming from afar,
Thy quest of wild adventure,
Thy sweet far star

Shall be the bitter path
To a high stern goal;
So bow thy head
To thine own soul.

Mary Aldis

NIGHTFALL

Deep-bosomed dusk obscures
The sun's last ray,
And night descending lures
Westward the day.
Naught that we love endures
For aye.

Among the withered leaves
The pale winds sigh,
And shrouded twilight weaves
Her memories wistfully;
Summer but gilds his sheaves
To die.

Flowers that the morn found bright
At evening fade;
Hours that have taken flight
Can ne'er be stayed:
Rome was eternal once,
Helen a maid.

Maurice Browne

VOYAGES

I

To come so soon to this imagined dark—
More velvet-deep than any midnight park!
Palaces hem me in, with blind black walls;
The water is hushed for a voice that never calls.
My gondolier sways silently over his oar.

II

At St. Blaise, à la Zuecca! Oh, my dear,
Laugh your gentle laughter! This old land,
From Provence to Paris—never fear—
All the heart can feel will understand.

A small town, a white town,
A town for you and me—
With a *Café Glacier* in the square,
And schooners at the quay;
And the *terrasse* of a small hotel
That looks upon the sea!
There gay sounds and sweet sounds
And sounds of peace come through:
The cook sings in the kitchen,
The pink-foot ring-doves coo,
And Julien brings the Pernods
That are bad for me and you.

At St. Blaise, à la Zuecca! Oh, my dear,
Laugh your gentle laughter! This old land,
From Provence to Paris—never fear—
All the heart can feel will understand.

III

Waves lap the beach, pines stretch to meet the sea;
A pale light on the horizon lingers and shines,
That might shine round the graal: and we
Stand very silent, underneath the pines.

O swift expresses for the spirit's flight!
Sometimes the moon is like a maid I know,
Looking roguishly back, and flying forward—so
I follow, flashing after. Blessed night!

IV

Do you remember, have you been these ways,
Dreaming or waking, after sunny days;
Sailed, in a moment, to imagined lands—
With one to love you, holding both your hands—
To old hot countries where the warm grape clings,
And an old, musical language strikes the ear
Like a caress, most exquisite to hear—
Your soul the voyager and your heart her wings?

Douglas Goldring

COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

GIVE HIM ROOM

I AM moved sometimes to wonder at the narrowness of the field accorded to the poet by conservative public taste, as compared with the freer range granted today, as a matter of course, to other artists.

The architect must pass with ease from cottage to cathedral, from the village shop to the skyscraper, and in doing so he may take his choice of classic, renaissance, gothic, secession, or catch-as-catch-can. The painter may paint figures, landscapes, marines, histories, mysteries, in any style that pleases him, from Rembrandt to Cézanne, from Cimabue to Kandinsky. Even the sculptor, despite the bulk and hardness of his medium, has the freedom of marble, bronze, terra-cotta, wax, wood, and many other substances, and of all styles from the Chou dynasty to the futuristic dream in his own soul. And the musician—but his range is the widest of all: he may compose song or symphony, fugue or rhapsody, opera, fantasia, or extravaganza; and to express all the fine harmonies or riotous discords of his dream he may call on hundreds of cunning instruments, singly or in miraculous unison, and on the human voice as well, and compel them to reveal him, whether he be Bach or Debussy, Wagner or Schoenberg.

And all these various extremes in these various arts the public admits to its streets and gardens, its theatres and con-

cert halls, its museums and exhibitions. Indeed, the more violent the extreme the more eagerly do we flock to see or hear, the more firmly do we believe that we must see and hear in order to bring our culture, or *kultur,* up to date, and meet the cannonading future with a quiet mind.

But the poet, the English-writing poet today—what does his potentially vast public expect of him? His language circles the globe; his era is cosmopolitan, enormous, full of newly released forces, of newly emerging ideas. He lives in a world which is wound in a net of rails and wires, of sea-ways and air-ways, a world of far kinships and inhuman wars, of intolerable poverty and luxury, incredible fellowships and isolations.

To express the unprecedented magnificence of this modern era, the unprecedented emotion of this changing world—to tell the "tale of the tribe" to the future, and thereby make the future as Homer and Dante and Shakespeare have made us, the poet has but one instrument—words. To use this instrument adequately, to make it resound far and wide to the heights and depths of the human spirit, the poet has need of the utmost freedom and the utmost sympathy. He needs as large and as eager an audience as any confrère in the other arts, an audience giving him the widest liberty of experiment in his effort to enrich his instrument, broaden its range, and break down technical barriers between his art and the far-flung modern tribes whom it must address.

Yet instead of such a co-operating public, what does he find? He finds an indifferent public, loath to listen at all,

but demanding, if it does listen, close observance of the well-worn formulae of rhymes and iambs which Chaucer imported from France in his scorn of the Anglo-Saxon tradition. If a poet ventures out of this classic park he is at once suspect; the public gives him up as mentally afflicted and leaves the paragraphers to diagnoze his malady. And even the more conservative of his fellow-poets question his right to batter down sacred walls.

Now POETRY has frankly tried to widen the poet's range, to question conventional barriers, whether technical or spiritual, inherited from the past, and help to bring the modern poet face to face with the modern world. We have printed not only odes and sonnets, blank verse dramas and rhymed pentameter narratives, but imagistic songs, futuristic fugues, fantasies in *vers libre,* rhapsodies in polyphonic prose—any dash for freedom which seemed to have life and hope in it—a fervor for movement and the beauty of open spaces—even if the goal was vague and remote, or quite unattainable in the distance.

And probably we shall go on in this reckless course, whether the public gathers in great numbers or not. A certain public—small, perhaps, but choice—is gathering; of that we receive indisputable evidence every day. Even that satirical newspaper editor who turns one of our fugues upside down, or that other who gaily parodies imagism, or that graver one who points at us the finger of scorn—all these are more or less consciously our friends, for they are helping the public to WAKE UP, to observe that something, through

whatever illusions and extravagances, is going on, that poetry is not a dead art but a living one, and that the poet today, like the liberator of long ago, WILL BE HEARD.

H. M.

THE RENAISSANCE

III

No, I am not such a fool as to believe that a man writes better for being well fed, or that he writes better for being hungry either. Hunger—some experience of it—is doubtless good for a man; it puts an edge on his style, and so does hard common sense. In the end, I believe in hunger, because it is an experience, and no artist can have too many experiences. Prolonged hunger, intermittent hunger and anxiety, will of course break down a man's constitution, render him fussy and over-irritable, and in the end ruin his work or prevent its full development.

That nation is profoundly foolish which does not get the maximum of best work out of its artists. The artist is one of the few producers. He, the farmer and the artisan create wealth; the rest shift and consume it. The net value of good art to its place of residence has been computed in logarithms; I shall not go into the decimals. When there was talk of selling Holbein's *Duchess of Milan* to an American, England bought the picture for three hundred and fifty thousand dollars. They figured that people came to London to see the picture, that the receipts of the community were worth more

per annum than the interest on the money. People go where there are good works of art. Pictures and sculpture and architecture pay. Even literature and poetry pay, for where there is enough intelligence to produce and maintain good writing, there society is pleasant and the real estate values increase. Mr. F. M. Hueffer has said that the difference between London and other places is that "No one lives in London merely for the sake of making money enough to live somewhere else."

The real estate values, even in Newark, New Jersey, would go up if Newark were capable of producing art, literature or the drama. In the quattrocento men went from one Italian city to another for reasons that were not solely commercial.

The question is not: Shall we try to keep up the arts?—but: How can we maintain the arts most efficiently? Paris can survive 1870 and 1914 because she is an intellectual and artistic vortex. She is that vortex not because she had a university in the middle ages—Cordova and Padua had also mediaeval universities. France recognizes the cash value of artists. They do not have to pay taxes save when convenient; they have a ministry of fine arts doing its semi-efficient best. Literary but inartistic England moves with a slow paw pushing occasional chunks of meat towards the favored. England does as well as can be expected, considering that the management of such affairs is entrusted to men whose interests are wholly political and who have no sort of intuition or taste. That is to say, in England, if someone of good social position

says that your work is "really literary," and that you are not likely to attack the hereditary interests or criticise the Albert Memorial, you can be reasonably sure of a pension. If your sales have suddenly slumped, you can also have "royal bounty," provided that you respect the senile and decrepit and say a good word for Watts' pictures.

The result is that France gets Rodin's work when he is fifty instead of the day he began doing good work. England gets Rodin's work after it has gone to seed, and rejects the best work of Epstein in his full vigor. England let half her last generation of poets die off, and pensioned such survivors as hadn't gone into something "practical."

But even this is enough to show that bourgeois France and stolid England recognize the cash value of art. I don't imagine that these sordid material considerations will weigh with my compatriots. America is a nation of idealists, as we all know; and they are going to support art for art's sake, because they love it, because they "want the best," even in art. They want beauty; they can't get along without it. They are already tired of spurious literature.

They recognize that all great art, all good art, goes against the grain of contemporary taste. They want men who can stand out against it. They want to back such men and women to the limit. How are they to go about it? Subsidy? Oh, no. They don't want to pauperize artists!

Of course Swinburne was subsidized by his immediate forebears, and Shelley also; and Browning, the robust, the virile, was subsidized by his wife; and even Dante and Villon

did not escape the stigma of having received charities. Nevertheless it is undemocratic to believe that a man with money should give—horrible word!—*give* it, even though not all of it, to painters and poets.

They give it to sterile professors; to vacuous preachers of a sterilized form of Christianity; they support magazines whose set and avowed purpose is either to degrade letters or to prevent their natural development. Why in heaven's name shouldn't they back creators, as well as students of Quinet? Why shouldn't they endow men whose studies are independent, put them on an equal footing with men whose scholarship is merely a pasteurized, Bostonized imitation of Leipzig?

How are they to go about it? Committees are notably stupid; they vote for mediocrity, their mind is the least common denominator. Even if there are a few intelligent members, the unintelligent members will be the ones with spare time, and they will get about trying to "run the committee," trying to get in new members who will vote for their kind of inanity. *Et cetera, ad infinitum.*

There is one obvious way, which does not compel individuals to wait for an organization:

Private people can give stipends to individual artists. That is to say, you, Mr. Rockefeller, you, Laird Andy of Skibo, and the rest of you (I am not leaving you out, reader, because you have only one million or half of one); you can endow individuals for life just as you endow chairs in pedagogy and calisthenics. More than that, you can endow them with the right to name their successors. If they don't

need the money they can pass it on, before their deaths, to younger artists in whom they believe.

For instance, you may begin by endowing Mr. James Whitcomb Riley, Mr. George Santayana, Mr. Theodore Roosevelt, Mr. Jack London, or anybody else you believe in. And any artist will applaud you. Any artist would rather have a benefice conferred upon him by *one* of these men as an individual than by a committee of the "forty leading luminaries of literature." I take a hard case; I don't suppose for a moment that Mr. Riley or Mr. Roosevelt, Mr. Santayana or Mr. London wants money—in all probability they would one and all refuse it if offered; but none of them would refuse the right of allotting an income, sufficient to cover the bare necessities of life, to some active artist whom they believe in.

If you endow enough men, individuals of vivid and different personality, and make the endowment perpetual, to be handed down from artist to artist, you will have put the arts in a position to defy the subversive pressure of commercial advantage, and of the mediocre spirit which is the bane and hidden terror of democracy.

Democracies have fallen, they have always fallen, because humanity craves the outstanding personality. And hitherto no democracy has provided sufficient place for such an individuality. If you so endow sculptors and writers you will begin for America an age of awakening which will overshadow the quattrocento; because our opportunity is greater than Leonardo's: we have more aliment, we have not one

classic tradition to revivify, we have China and Egypt, and the unknown lands lying upon the roof of the world—Khotan, Kara-shar and Kan-su.

So much for the individual opportunity—now for the civic. Any city which cares for its future can perfectly well start its vortex. It can found something between a graduate seminar and the usual "Arts Club" made up of business men and of a few "rather more than middle-aged artists who can afford to belong".

I have set the individually endowed artist against the endowed professor or editor. I would set the endowment of such grouping of young artists parallel with the endowment, for one year or three, of scholars and fellows by our universities. Some hundreds of budding professors are so endowed, to say nothing of students of divinity.

There is no reason why students of the arts—not merely of painting but of all the arts—should not be so endowed, and so grouped: that is, as artists, not merely as followers of one segregated art. Such endowment would get them over the worst two or three years of their career, the years when their work can't possibly pay.

Scientists are so endowed. It is as futile to expect a poet to get the right words, or any sort of artist to do real work, with one eye on the public, as it would be to expect the experimenter in a chemical laboratory to advance the borders of science, if he have constantly to consider whether his atomic combinations are going to flatter popular belief, or suit the holders of monopolies in some over-expensive com-

pound. The arts and sciences hang together. Any conception which does not see them in their interrelation belittles both. What is good for one is good for the other.

Has any one yet answered the query: why is it that in other times artists went on getting more and more powerful as they grew older, whereas now they decline after the first outburst, or at least after the first successes? Compare this with the steady growth of scientists.

.

The three main lines of attack, then, which I have proposed in this little series of articles, are as follows:

First, that we should develop a criticism of poetry based on world-poetry, on the work of maximum excellence. (It does not in the least matter whether this standard be that of my own predilections, or crochets or excesses. It matters very much that it be decided by men who have made a first-hand study of world-poetry, and who "have had the tools in their hands.")

Second, that there be definite subsidy of individual artists, writers, etc., such as will enable them to follow their highest ambitions without needing to conciliate the ignorant *en route.* (Even some of our stock-size magazine poets might produce something worth while if they could afford occasionally to keep quiet for six months or a year at a stretch.)

Third, there should be a foundation of such centres as I have described. There should be in America the "*gloire de cénacle.*" Tariff laws should favor the creative author rather than the printer, but that matter is too long to be gone into.

In conclusion, the first of these matters must be fought out among the artists themselves. The second matter concerns not only the excessively rich, but the normally and moderately rich, who contribute to all sorts of less useful affairs: redundant universities, parsons, Y. M. C. A.'s, and the general encouragement of drab mediocrity. The third matter concerns millionaires, multimillionaires and municipalities.

When a civilization is vivid it preserves and fosters all sorts of artists—painters, poets, sculptors, musicians, architects. When a civilization is dull and anemic it preserves a rabble of priests, sterile instructors, and repeaters of things second-hand. If literature is to reappear in America it must come not through, but in spite of, the present commercial system of publication. *Ezra Pound*

PRAISE FROM MR. COLUM

The Art and Literature Department of the Chicago Woman's Club gave a luncheon on March 27th in honor of Mr. Padraic Colum, the Irish poet, after his morning lecture on modern Irish poetry. Complimentary speeches were made by Mr. Karleton Hackett, of the Chicago *Evening Post;* Prof. Cross, of the department of Celtic literature in the University of Chicago, and Prof. Dickinson, of the English department at Madison. Then Mrs. J. H. Buckingham, who presided, called upon Prof. Ferdinand Schevill to speak of local appreciation of the art, and especially of POETRY.

Mr. Schevill, though in the department of history at the University, is one of the most discriminating connoisseurs of poetry in the country, with a talent for reading it aloud as rare as Isaye's mastery of the violin. To hear this lover of beautiful cadence read the *Nightingale* or the *Prothalamion* is a memorable experience of perfect art. But that is another story.

Mr. Schevill told the club-members and guests of his early reluctance to subscribe for POETRY, and his hesitation before unwrapping the first number—his fear that it would prove banal. This feeling, he said, changed to delight as he read the little brochure, and since then each number has been welcomed with ever keener zest, until now he looks forward to POETRY as the finest and most stimulating of all his periodical visitors. He wound up by frankly urging his two hundred hearers to give themselves similar pleasure by subscribing.

The guest of honor, Mr. Colum, in seconding this suggestion, told of the eagerness with which the magazine is received and handed around among English and Irish poets, and their appreciation of its success in gathering together the best work of the various schools, and informing the world of what the American poets are doing. "It is far and away better than any magazine of the kind in England or Ireland," he said; "in fact, I think POETRY is the best magazine—by far—in the English language."

In the face of such authoritative praise from the poet and the connoisseur of poetry, the editor need say nothing but

urge the friends of the magazine to spread the news and gather in an ever-increasing public. *H. M.*

REVIEWS

Songs from the Clay, by James Stephens. Macmillan.

There are various kinds of enchantment in this brief volume. First, an elfin glee that shivers with delight, that finds an unexpected vigor and beauty by simply nosing around underneath the obvious. The tremor of wildness in nature, the glint of unseen wings, the beat of fairies' feet, the tune on the wind, the terror in the void—it is perhaps the special privilege of the Celt to discern these things; but few even of the Celts have presented them with such witty brevity, such choice felicity of phrase, as Mr. Stephens commands from his happy muse. Whatever he says one believes, no matter what the miracle may be:

> I was there all alone in the night,
> With the moon, and we talked for a while,
> And her face was a wonder of light,
> And her smile was a beautiful smile.
>
> She leaned down and I nearly went mad,
> (And she was as frightened as me),
> But I got the kiss that she had
> Intended to give to the sea.

Who would doubt this moon-magic? Or who can fail to see this "satyr creeping through the wood"?

> He peeped about, he minced upon the ground,
> He put a thin hand up to hide a grin;
> He doubled up and laughed without a sound—
> The very bodiment of happy sin.

Also tragic intensities of mystery are stated with the same high simplicity, the same convincing austerity of phrase. For example, *In the Night:*

There always is a noise when it is dark;
It is the noise of silence and the noise
Of blindness.

The noise of silence and the noise of blindness
Do frighten me;
They hold me stark and rigid as a tree!

These frighten me,
These hold me stark and rigid as a tree!
Because at last their tumult is more loud
Than thunder.

Because at last
Their tumult is more loud than thunder:
They terrify my soul,
They tear my heart asunder!

The poet's intimacies are not alone with sprites and elfin mysteries, however; he has a deep human tenderness for grass and flowers, singing birds and suffering animals. *The Snare* is in the same class with Burns' *To a Field Mouse,* and the resemblance of the trapped rabbit to sufferers higher in the social scale is not the less poignant for not being stated.

I hear a sudden cry of pain!
 There is a rabbit in a snare:
Now I hear the cry again,
 But I cannot tell from where.

But I cannot tell from where
 He is calling out for aid;
Crying on the frightened air,
 Making everything afraid.

Making everything afraid,
 Wrinkling up his little face,
As he cries again for aid;
 And I cannot find the place!

And I cannot find the place
 Where his paw is in the snare:
Little one! O little one!
 I am searching everywhere.

This linking of stanzas together by the repetition of the last line is a device employed by Mr. Stephens with rare discretion. By this and other repetitions, and by the extreme simplicity of his diction, he aids his own conviction to convince us. Let me recommend this modern Irishman to the numerous poets of the *O thou* school who search the chronicles and dictionaries for antique subjects and Elizabethan phrases. We rarely believe them for an instant, whereas we never question the truth of whatever Mr. Stephens chooses to summon out of nothingness in lithe and naked beauty.

H. M.

The Night Watchman and Other Poems, by Vance Thompson. Kennerley.

Mr. Thompson's poems express in mournful music the sensuous passions and despairs of an emotional soul. One does not usually question the poet's conviction, or the languorous beauty of his rhythmic tunes.

But oh, the reader, living in this year of grace—or, rather, of turmoil—1915, does beg him to wake up. His book is pervaded by the heavily perfumed atmosphere of the nineties. It is full of "dim years" and "augural nights," of "lethal

wine" and "nenuphars," of "avid girls" and "temptuous thighs" and "desultory suave serpents": all of which interesting phenomena went out of fashion in 1900, and are no longer effective except to arouse dim memories of echoes.

We should like to recommend to this poet, and others similarly unaware of their epoch, a few months' discipline as reader for POETRY. They would get so tired of artificial and hyperbolic language, and of supersensuous experiences, that they would sign a pledge, one and all, to sing hereafter only in words of one syllable on the commonest every-day affairs. In short, they would go forth holding up the stark nude figure of Simplicity as the only modern muse.

That Mr. Thompson is too good a poet to resign himself to those lethal years aforesaid, is the special reason why we urge upon him this discipline. *The Night Watchman, When Love Died,* and *The City* are typical of his style at its best. Also, this lyric, *The Swallow:*

> There's a swallow flying to Venice
> And sick for a sight of the sea.
> O wayfarer, O swallow,
> Fly light and low—I would follow
> To the dim blue isles of Venice,
> And the blue dim light of the sea.
>
> I am sick for the strange new faces,
> For the flags and the ships and the sea;
> For the new strange life and the singing,
> For the boatman's cries and the ringing
> Of bells in the windy places,
> And the windy foam on the sea.

H. M.

The Little King, by Witter Bynner. Kennerley.

Here is Louis XVII again, one of the children of sorrow whom the world will not permit to die. In Mr. Bynner's hands he is an ideally royal little lad, who refuses to escape from his tormentors when this means leaving a substitute in misery. A touching play, whose characters, though possibly too consistent, too true to type, are dramatically contrasted in a succession of emotional scenes moving to a pathetic climax. Apparently this brief little play would act well. *H. M.*

Lyrics of a Lad, by Scharmel Iris. Seymour, Daughaday & Co., Chicago.

At his best this Italian-American poet has a delicate fancy and a true lyric touch. As yet he too often imitates Keats and other classics, and he likes too well stock figures and phrases, like "the rubies of sun-set," "the gold of the morn," "pale twilight's bier," "war's red hell." In the same way one finds him sometimes making poetry by sheer force of will instead of by compulsion of inner vision.

But these are perhaps faults of youth; Mr. Iris may be preparing his technic for the visions to come. Even now a few of these lyrics seem deeply felt and austerely expressed. Besides those published last December in POETRY, of which *Early Nightfall* is especially lovely, we would mention *I am a-weary as the wind, A Nameless Prayer,* and this brief *Iteration:*

> My son is dead and I am going blind,
> And in the Ishmael-wind of grief

I tremble like a leaf;
I have no mind for any word you say:
My son is dead and I am going blind.

H. M.

At the Shrine, by George Herbert Clarke. Stewart & Kidd Co.

Three or four poems in this book—*Last Desire, Chess Player, The Mother, Tryst*—almost persuade one that Mr. Clarke might be a poet if he could forget all the poetry he ever read. But usually he is saying *O thou* in conventional measures, and rattling a bag of rhymes in which he reveals no more music. If only he could be less agile he might move more gracefully and get nearer his goal.

Remember Louvain, a Little Book of Liberty and War, selected by E. V. Lucas. Methuen & Co., Ltd., London.

This brief anthology of war poems is misnamed in that it consists mostly of well-known classics, among which are poems of four Americans—Whitman, Whittier, Longfellow and Mrs. Howe. The living poets in its rather short list are Messrs. Newbolt, Noyes, Conan Doyle and Kipling, but nothing from these is so stirring as Henley's *England, my England,* or certain older and more familiar songs.

The Gypsy Trail, an Anthology for Campers, compiled by Pauline Goldmark and Mary Hopkins. Kennerley.

This volume, conveniently small for camping purposes, seems the result of wide reading, a free open-air spirit, and good taste, on the part of its editors. It ranges from the

Book of Job to Fiona Macleod, from Lucretius to Bliss Carman, and few lovers of the open road would object to many of the entries.

OUR CONTEMPORARIES

ART AND PHOTOGRAPHY

Miss Amy Lowell had an interesting review of Mr. Robert Frost's *North of Boston* in a recent number of *The New Republic*. This new weekly, by the way, gives promise of competent criticism of art and letters, and the fact that it has, in one or two instances, followed some of POETRY'S "leads" is not a little gratifying.

Miss Lowell's review is valuable because it gives one poet's personal impression of another. But Miss Lowell is not herself a realist, and perhaps that is why she seems to have missed the essential quality of Mr. Frost's work. The exception taken to the following paragraph is not a mere quibble. This comparison of art and photography is a commonplace so unsound and false that it should be relegated to the ash heap:

> I have said that Mr. Frost's work is almost photographic. The qualification was unnecessary, it is photographic. The pictures, the characters, are reproduced directly from life, they are burnt into his mind as though it were a sensitive plate. He gives out what has been put in, unchanged by any personal process. His imagination is bounded by what he has seen, he is confined within the limits of his experience or at least what might have been his experience, and bent all one way like the wind-blown trees of New England hillsides.

It would have been more just if Miss Lowell had said: Mr. Frost's work carries such a conviction of reality that it is impressed upon the reader's mind as if upon a sensitive photographic film. For how has this effect been achieved? Certainly not by any non-selective, mechanical, photographic process on Mr. Frost's part. How is it possible for any human being, least of all an artist, to "give out what has been put in, *unchanged by any personal mental process?*" And even if Mr. Frost were as non-selectively receptive as a kodak—by whom then, or by what agency, was the remarkably selective material of his poems put in? Who put into Mr. Frost what came out of him? Who took the trouble to arrange the hills, and the blackberry fields, and the stark New England people, in just the right folds for Mr. Frost's kodak mind, if all volition on his part is left out of the question?

The artist, not the kodak, is the arbiter of realism in art. Even if external truth were considered as the final end of art, which is ridiculous, the kodak is a notorious liar in comparison with the human eye.

From Miss Lowell's estimate one gains the impression that Mr. Frost is still in the stage of unreasoning response to external stimuli; that he is, in short, unconscious of his own reactions. And this colors her entire view of the man's work. Because the poet speaks through his characters, Miss Lowell attributes to him *their* lack of humor. But humor depends upon a certain detachment of vision, and without

it Mr. Frost could not have given us the essentially satiric quality of these grim New England people, to whom the one saving grace of humor—the ability to see themselves with a detached vision—is denied.

Miss Lowell herself seems to have a fixed idea about Mr. Frost's purpose in giving us a mirror of New England life. She speaks of the poem, *Home Burial,* as representing a New England woman who is unable to take up the burden of life after her child has died. Now it is very possible that that woman was not a New Englander. At any rate she represents a much less callous type than her husband. In him is the sinister quality of New England life in its most desperate form—a life of kill-joy practicality, of a hardness to things of beauty and feeling almost unbelievable to one of a mold less cramped and harsh. It would not be the death of her child that would drive this woman insane! If this woman had been less normally responsive in feeling, there would not have been the essential tragedy of this poem—in fact this poem would not have been at all!

That the reader identifies Mr. Frost with his characters is simply indicative of the high quality of Mr. Frost's art. This is the highest form of synthetic realism. Mr. Frost may indeed write with "his eye on the object," but his vision penetrates the object and infuses it with that imaginative life which is the primary and essential quality of art.

A. C. H.

CORRESPONDENCE

DEATH OF A YOUNG GERMAN POET

Editor of POETRY: So far only one German poet has been reported as killed in the war—Georg Frakl. Frakl belonged to the new school in feeling, if not in form. His chief gift was his ability to select the salient qualities of a landscape and, by reproducing them with a few strokes of graphic and imaginative power, convey a rich yet subtle impression of the whole. In the death of Frakl German literature has lost a young poet of decided originality and promise. *Charles Wharton Stork*

Mr. Stork, who is in the faculty of the University of Pennsylvania, translates as follows one of Frakl's finest lyrics:

WHISPERED IN THE AFTERNOON

Feebly glints the sun's thin ray,
From the tree the ripe fruit falleth,
In the deep blue distance dwelleth
Silence—'tis an endless day.

Sharp a shot the stillness cleaves,
Prone to earth its victim bringing.
Harsh refrain of brown girls singing
Dies amid the fall of leaves.

Dream-wings o'er God's forehead play,
And He thinketh but in color.
Shadows round the hill grow duller,
Bordered by a dim decay.

Twilight, drunken with repose;
Sad guitar-notes trickle faintly.
Back unto his lamplight saintly
In a dream the wanderer goes.

A "SPOON RIVER" BOOST

Dear Editor: Let me quote a paragraph in a letter from Ridgely Torrence. He says:

"We find New York more vital this year than we have ever known it. This town, together with the whole country, seems to be waking up to poetry and the other arts as never before. Never has there been such a genuine and widespread interest in it. I really believe the place has come to be as alive as Chicago."

There now! Perhaps in the future you will trust my powers as soothsayer. The other day, when I expressed this sentiment, you feared I might be over-excited by the interest of people in our own circle. You doubted my power to catch far-off vibrations. Now if there should be an American renascence, and it could be traced to 543 Cass Street, what would you say to that? Yours very sincerely,

Edgar Lee Masters

MR. CARY PROTESTS

My dear Editor: Now that you have so graciously corrected your "injustice to Mr. Browne," may I ask that you consider your injustice to me? I was introduced at the meeting of the Book and Play Club as the associate editor of *The Dial.* In the course of my talk I frankly stated that my connection with that paper was then officially ended, and would in a few days be actually ended. That I should be

considered representative of *The Dial,* or *The Dial* of me, seems to me most unjust.

In the course of a review of all the periodicals published in Chicago which have, or pretend to have, anything to do with literature, I made certain specific criticisms of *The Dial,* but I think I made no statements, one way or the other, about its conventionality, or about its financial history. I am, and was, under the impression that *The Dial* is a peculiarly successful business enterprise. Indeed, what I complained of was not its struggle, but its innocence of any struggle whatever. Yours sincerely,

Lucian Cary

NOTES

Seven of the poets represented in this number are new to readers of POETRY. Of these three have published books of verse, and three or four make their first public appearance as poets.

Mr. Joseph Warren Beach, of Minneapolis, now in the English department of the University of Minnesota, is a Harvard Ph. D. of 1907, and the author of *Sonnets of the Head and Heart* (Badger, 1903.)

Mr. Maurice Browne, though English by birth, is now director of the Chicago Little Theatre, and therefore one of the most important present influences of light and leading in dramatic art. He is the author of four brief books of verse: *Zetetes, Epithalamios, Job, a Dramatic Poem,* and lastly *Songs of Exile* (Samurai Press, 1908.)

Mr. Horace Holley, born in Connecticut in 1887 and now a resident of New York, is the author of *The Inner Garden* (Sherman, French & Co., 1913) and *The Stricken King* (Shakespeare Head Press, 1913.)

Mr. Floyd Dell, born in Iowa and recently literary editor of the Chicago *Evening Post,* now lives in New York as one of the editors of *The Masses.*

Miss Marianne Moore, now in charge of the Commercial Department of the U. S. Indian school at Carlisle, Pa., was graduated from Bryn Maur in 1909. Mary Aldis (Mrs. Arthur T.) and Mabel D. Carry (Mrs. Edward F.) are Chicagoans.

Of the poets who have appeared before in POETRY: Dr. W. C. Williams, of Rutherford, N. J., is a prominent American member of the Imagist group. Mr. Douglas Goldring, a young London poet, is the author of *A Country Boy*, and *Streets, a Book of London Verses* (Max Goschen, 1912.) Miss Louise Driscoll, of Catskill, N. Y., is the author of *The Metal Checks*, which won POETRY's war-poem prize last November. Miss Clara Shanafelt, of Dayton, Ohio, is a young poet whom the London *Egoist* includes among the Imagists.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Poems, by John Black. Privately printed, Brooklyn.

Visions and Revisions, by John Cowper Powys. G. Arnold Shaw, New York.

Father Tierney's Poems. Neale Publishing Co., New York.

Captain Craig, a Book of Poems, by Edwin Arlington Robinson. Macmillan.

Bypaths in Arcady, a Book of Love Songs, by Kendall Banning: Illustrations by Lejaren A. Hiller, and a Note of Comment by John W. Alexander. Brothers of the Book, Chicago.

The Seamless Robe, by Gustav Melby. The Gorham Press.

Songs from the Clay, by James Stephens. Macmillan.

Fairyland, The Book of the Opera, by Brian Hooker. Yale University Press.

A War Bible, A Book of Smiles, by James Austin Murray. Privately printed.

Via Crucis, by Seldon L. Whitcomb. Torch Press, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Parsival, by Gerhard Hauptmann. Translation by Oakley Williams. Macmillan.

Sun and Saddle Leather, by Charles Badger Clark, Jr. Gorham Press.

Selections from Catullus, translated by Mary Stewart. Gorham Press.

Earth With Her Bars, by Edith Dart. Longmans, Green and Co., London.

Aura, by Lawrence Atkinson. Elkin Mathews, London.
Poems by Maurice Maeterlinck, done into English Verse by Bernard Miall. Dodd, Mead & Co.
Verse: The Night Watchman and Other Poems, by Vance Thompson. Kennerley.
The Lutanist, by Alice Wilson. Gorham Press.
Songs of Love and Rebellion, by Covington Hall. Weihing Co., New Orleans.
Collected Poems, by A. E. Macmillan.
Resurgam: Poems and Lyrics, by O. R. Howard Thompson. William M. Bains, Philadelphia.
Dramatic Poems, Songs and Sonnets, by Donald Robertson. Seymour, Daughaday & Co., Chicago.
The Shoes of Happiness, and Other Poems, by Edwin Markham. Doubleday, Page & Co.
The Book of the Serpent, by Katharine Howard. Sherman, French & Co.

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—*Literary Digest, February 13, 1915.*

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there must be great audiences too.
—Whitman.

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Poetry

A Magazine of Verse

Edited by Harriet Monroe

JUNE 1915

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The Syrian Lover in Exile—Alma Mater—After Vespers.
To Rupert Brooke I-V Arthur Davison Ficke
Lord of Morning—Noon . . Bliss Carman
La Rue de la Montague Sainte-Genevieve Dorothy Dudley
Sonnets Georgia Wood Pangborn
The Walk on the Moor—Morning on the Beach.
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Comments and Reviews
The Death of Rupert Brooke—Hark to Sturge Moore—Reviews.
Our Contemporaries—Correspondence—Notes

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Poetry
A Magazine of Verse

VOL. VI
NO. III

JUNE, 1915

"I SING OF MY LIFE WHILE I LIVE IT"

THE SYRIAN LOVER IN EXILE REMEMBERS THEE,
LIGHT OF MY LAND

ROSE and amber was the sunset on the river,
Red-rose the hills about Bingariz.
High upon their brows, the black tree-branches
Spread wide across the turquoise sky.
I saw the parrots fly—
A cloud of rising green from the long green grasses,
A mist of gold and green winging fast
Into the gray shadow-silence of the tamarisks.
Pearl-white and wild was the flood below the ford.
I ran down the long hot road to thy door;
Thy door shone—a white flower in the dusk lingering to close.

The stars rose and stood above thy casement.
I cast my cloak and climbed to thee,
To thee, Makhir Subatu!

.

Naked she stood and glistening like the stars over her—
Her hair trailed about her like clouds about the moon—
Naked as the soul seeking love,
As the soul that waits for death.
White with benediction, pendulous, unfolding from the dark
As the crystal sky of morning, she waited,
And leaned her light above the earth of my desire.
Like a world that spins from the hand of Infinity,
Up from the night I leaped—
To thee, Makhir Subatu!

.

Pearl-bright and wild, a flood without a ford,
The River of Love flowed on.
Her eyes were gleaming sails in a storm,
Dipping, swooning, beckoning.
The dawn came and templed over her;
Gray-arched and wide, the sanctuary of light descended.
It was the altar where I lay;
And I lifted my face at last, praying.
I saw the first glow fall about her,
Like marble pillars coming forth from the shadow.
I raised my hands, thanking the gods

That in love I had grown so tall
I could touch the two lamps in heaven,
The sun and moon hanging in the low heaven beneath her face.
How great through love had I grown
To breathe my flame into the two lamps of heaven!

.

O eyes of the eagle and the dove,
Eyes red-starred and white-starred,
Eyes that have too much seen, too much confessed,
Close, close, beneath my kisses!
Tell me no more, demand me no more—it is day.
I see the gold-green rain of parrot-wings
Sparkling athwart the gray and rose-gold morning.
I go from thy closed door down the long lone road
To the ricefields beyond the river,
Beyond the river that has a ford.

.

I came to thee with hope, with desire. I have them no longer.
Sleep, sleep; I am locked in thee.

.

Thus the exile lover remembers thee, Makhir Subatu!

ALMA MATER

The Immigrant at Columbia

Gajor, richest of the Syrians, is my friend.
He sends me to the vast school,
Where the great square-winged houses circle
And call the young men in.
"Come! Come, beyond our pillars and our fountains!
Come from the restless, spending city,
Passionate and cold.
Her blistered mouth would drink you dry
Ere your eager hopes had found a soil and a sun
To draw them to a high bursting fragrance and a white,
white bloom,
Roofing the world!
Come behind my gray-brown walls—
Even, strong, sober walls without towers.
Like a warm, still wine in the cup of youth,
Lift up your young blood here
To the lips of learning!"

O Alma Mater:
From the red, red dust, the long dead dust
Of ancient Syria, I come
To lie between thy feet of lasting bronze
And look up—and look up!
To see thy laureled head—

Massive, calm, with gloried brow—
Flame before the open portals of the House of Books;
Where the thoughts of noble men—
Dressed in all habits, speaking all tongues,
Gathered from all ages of time—
Meet like pilgrims at one shrine,
For the worship of service to thy sons.
O mother, thy brow shines loftily
Above the endless sullen roar of heavy whips
In the unmastered market of slaves!
What light is on thy face, brighter than the dawn?
It is the wide-flung beauty of her Torch—the Other Woman,
Who stands upon the sea as thou upon the land,
And lifts her light,
Beckoning the sons of weeping centuries
Out of their long dead dust, across the ten great seas,
Into this harbor!

Ay, into this harbor have I come,
Where white sails of the world, like strings of a pearled lute,
Chant Liberty—and Liberty—and Liberty,
In the crashing wind of her lifted arm!
(Oh, chords from the smitten silver of light!)—
Mother, thy breast is bared and beating high to catch that song!

AFTER VESPERS

The singers are all hushed and gone
From the chapel.
Dreaming, I linger here alone,
Ever unsatisfied, yearning.
Softly the gray Silence enters, and sits beside me.
Her palms are flushed
From the brow of the passionate city.
She laid them there for a cool blessing of peace;
Now, their touch quivers me.
She is shod with unworded prayers.
Violets from the spring twilight are her eyes,
Deep with desire.

Ajan Syrian

TO RUPERT BROOKE

Died before the Dardanelles, April, 1915

I

You too, "superb on unreturning tides,"
Pass; and the brightness dies out of the air.
Our life itself seems dreamlike, waiting where
The desert of no paths forever hides
Your hates and longings, your revolts and prides,
The secret miracle that your songs declare—
As these few reliques to our eager care
And long delight your stricken hand confides.

Beautiful lover of beauty!—child of the sea,
Sunlight, and mysteries of the evening foam!
Though sleep shall heal the feet too far a-roam,
Are you at peace now as you longed to be?—
Or beauty-hungered does your soul go free
Out of the harbor of its mortal home.

II

It was enough, that common men had died
In this vast horror of the shaken world
Where life's primeval hate broadcast is hurled
To crush the age's generous youth and pride

In flame and anguish; proving how we lied
Who dreamed a nobler banner now unfurled
Over mankind—while bitter smoke-wreaths curled
Up from the Moloch-lips we had denied!

But you not as this age's sacrifice
Should have gone down; you were foredoomed to be
Not of the age, but of all time a light.
This hour has grief—too much!—but you are price
That the race pays for its apostasy,
Its hour of madness in the abysmal night.

III

Song lingered at your lips—delicate song,
Whose flowing waters in the golden day
Bore from the hill-lands of the far-away
The dews of rarer heights for which men long.
But when the tawdry baseness of the throng
Opposed to that fair stream its dull delay,
Your words leaped skyward into stinging spray,
A scornful challenge to the powers of wrong.

When you sang of beauty, Beauty's self came down,
Blue-robed and shining, to the courts you laid
Where the heart walks at evening, hushed and free.
But when you touched the dullard and the clown,

The jangled keys of your tense spirit made
Discords, that were your prayer to harmony.

IV

Clear level light across the English hills
Where garden-shadows track the afternoon;
Dusk under willows where a summer moon
Its long cascades of ghostly silver spills
Down pools of silence; a refrain that fills
The heart with sense of some forgotten tune;
The trembling white limbs of youth's night of June
When life's whole perfume up the wind distils:

These drift out of the regions that enfold you,
And from my memory almost smooth away
The picture of your known and mortal face,—
As though the lineaments could no longer hold you
Their prisoner, nor the earthen lamp betray
With dust the flame that there had dwelling-place.

V

The song is ended, but the years have set
No boundary to your memory; you have done
A young man's miracles; your dreams have won
Some little of fadeless wonder from the fret

And torture of the days; your eyes have met
The eyes of the Archangel of the Sun;
And your lips cried, in brief last orison,
A gleam and glory men will not forget.

The rest is silence . . . your smile of swift delight
Shall flash to ours no more, nor shall the hand
Bring the heart's greeting as you come again.
Only an echo from the silent land—
Only a gleam sometimes through summer rain—
"A width, a shining peace under the night."

Arthur Davison Ficke

LORD OF MORNING

Lord of morning, light of day,
 Sacred color-kindling Sun,
We salute thee in the way—
 Roadside pilgrims robed in dun.

For thou art a pilgrim too,
 Overlord of all our band;
In thy fervor we renew
 Quests we do not understand.

At thy summons we arise,
 At thy touch put glory on,
And with glad unanxious eyes
 Move into the march of dawn.

NOON

Behold, now, where the pageant of high June
Halts in the glowing noon!
The trailing shadows rest on plain and hill;
The bannered hosts are still;
While over forest crown and mountain-head
The azure tent is spread.

The song is hushed in every woodland throat;
Moveless the lilies float;
Even the ancient ever-murmuring sea
Sighs only fitfully;
The cattle drowse in the field-corner's shade;
Peace on the world is laid.

It is the hour when Nature's caravan,
That bears the pilgrim Man
To the far region of his hope sublime
Across the desert of time,
Rests in the green oasis of the year,
Its journey's end drawn near.

Ah, traveler, hast thou nought of thanks or praise
For these fleet halcyon days?—
No courage to uplift thee from despair
Born with the breath of prayer?
Then turn thee to the lilied field once more!
God stands in his tent door.

Bliss Carman

LA RUE DE LA MONTAGNE SAINTE-GENEVIEVE

I have seen an old street weeping—
Narrow, dark, ascending;
Water o'er the spires
Of a church descending;
The church thrice veiled—in rain,
In the shadow of the years,
In the grace of old design;
Dim dwellings, blind with tears,
Rotting either side
The winding passage way,
To where the river crosses
Weeping, under gray
And limpid heavens weeping.
Gardens I have seen
Through archèd doors, whose gratings
Ever cry the keen
Dim melodies of lace
Long used and rare, gardens
With an old-time grace
Vibrating, dimly trembling
In the music of the rain.
Roses I have seen drip a faint
Perfume, and lilacs train
A quivering loveliness

From door to archèd door,
Passing by in flower carts;
While waters ever pour
O'er the white stones of the fountain,
Melting icily away
Half way up the mountain;
Where to mingle tears with tears,
Their clothes misshapen, sobbing,
Two or three old women,
In wooden sabots hobbling,
Meet to fill their pitchers,
From the stream of water leaping
Through the lips, a long time parted,
Of a face grotesquely weeping—
A carven face forever weeping.

Dorothy Dudley

SONNETS

THE WALK ON THE MOOR

"Tonight is many-sorrowed," said the moon:
She and the clouds were whirled above the moor;
Small as a glow-worm shone my cottage door.
"Cometh the morning late or over-soon
The night is sorrow's measure," ran her rune.
Do ye not hear forgotten littlenesses,
Mother, whose kiss lies warm on children's tresses?
Hear, then, the soundless rush of elfin shoon,

Feet that are but the wind across the grass—
How long ago they passed to women's wailing!
Women whose ancient sorrow leaves you this,
Ye that have borne!—that not a breeze shall pass
Across your hair but 'tis small fingers trailing,
And tears shall sting you at your children's kiss.

MORNING ON THE BEACH

Some brighter thing than sunlight touched the sea
And out of dawn arose a wind of joy:
They woke and chirped—my girl, and then my boy—
Like birds that have not learned what fears there be.

"And now," I thought, "there dawns a day to me:
One day, at least, defies moon-prophecies;
One day shall call the old world sorrows lies,
So let us now be happy utterly!"

Then we had playmates in the grains of sand—
I heard them, many-laughing, by the water;
The sweet air thrilled to speech without a tongue.
They met my boy and led him by the hand
To venturous depths; they showed my little daughter
How children built on sand when time was young.

Georgia Wood Pangborn

HADLEYBURG

Hadleyburg was the most honest and upright town in all the region round about.—Mark Twain.

John Barleycorn he said the town
Was half a knave and half a clown,
Nor saner than the law allowed:
With all its stiff restraints and prim
Observances, the place, he vowed,
Had too much starch in it for him;
And kept itself upon the jump
To whip the devil round the stump.

That crooked souls and crooked knees
Distinguished men from walking trees,
Was sagely then and there agreed:
But, bent on laughing them to scorn,
Mad John, denying them a creed,
Resolved to stray amid the corn,
And eavesdropping from stalk to stalk,
To hear some goblin money talk.

And, peeping from behind a bee,
He fell into a reverie,
Beholding them so smugly housed;
And pondered what would happen had
Some sudden thunder been aroused!

Thinking of which the silly lad
Collapsed beside a brawling brook,
And laughed until the welkin shook.

LITTLE SONGS OF THE FOREST

Spring Song

Softly at dawn a whisper stole
Down from the Green House on the Hill,
Enchanting many a ghostly bole
And wood song with the ancient thrill.

Gossiping on the countryside,
Spring and the wandering breezes say
God has thrown heaven open wide
And let the thrushes out today.

Serenade

The Moon puts on her silver veil
And shawl of lace: and with far lutes
And violins in many a dale
The thrushes blow their woodland flutes.

Oh, and with many a ghostly cheer,
Under the moon the forest heaves
And sways with ecstasy to hear
The eerie laughter of the leaves.

Canticle

Devoutly worshiping the oak
Wherein the barred owl stares,
The little feathered forest folk
Are praying sleepy prayers:

Praying the summer to be long
And drowsy to the end,
And daily full of sun and song,
That broken hopes may mend.

Praying the golden age to stay
Until the whippoorwill
Appoints a windy moving-day,
And hurries from the hill.

Autumn Song

Once more the crimson rumor
Fills the forest and the town;
And the green fires of summer
Are burning—burning down.

Oh, the green fires of summer
Are burning down once more;
And my heart is in the ashes
On the forest floor!

Interlude

Since yesterday has been no word,
Nor voice of anything
To thrill the forest: and no bird
Has any heart to sing.

Since yesterday has been no track
Of Pan nor any power,
To lure the gypsy summer back,
And fool a single flower.

Requiescat

Gray are the sentry leaves and thinned
That whisper at my cabin door,
Sighing and mourning as the wind
Worries and walks the forest floor.

O leaves, O leaves that find no voice
In the white silence of the snows,
To bid the crimson woods rejoice,
Or wake the wonder of the rose!

William Griffi

SONGS OF HUNGER

THE CROWN, THE PLATE AND THE BOWL

You'll crown my head with a silver crown
You'll bring me food on a golden plate,
You'll offer me drink from a carven cup—
If only I bow me down.

But the crown was wrought by a wanton trull,
The gold was wrung from an harlot's hire,
The wine is blood, and the bowl you bring
Was carved from an human skull.

THE TEMPLE OF HUNGER

There's a temple, dark and silent,
Littered with dust and bone,
Where the countless hoards of the starving
Bow at the Lean God's throne.

In the chilling gloom by the altar,
Whence even hatred has fled,
Sits the God of Hunger gloating
Over tribute of starven dead.

Before him, and beaten and bitter,
From eastern and western lands,
Cringe the people the God of Hunger
Will crumple between his hands.

Silent they crouch and hopeless;
Each with a look that sees,
Each one but a stricken shadow,
Its forehead between its knees.

A RIDDLE

Bitter as tears
That for years
Are unshed;
Ashen and gray
As a day
That is dead;
Evil and ill,
With a chill
O' the vault;
Barren as beaches
God leaches
With salt;
Hopeless as morrows
In sorrows
Immersed;

Desolate, grim,
Like a hymn
 Of the cursed;
Lone as a cry
From the sky
 Or the sea:
Answer my saying
In praying—
 For me.

THE LEAN GRAY RATS

The lean gray rats of hunger
 Have gnawed my soul in twain;
Till cursing the God that made it,
 The good half died in pain.

The ill half lived and prospered,
 Waxed brutal and strong and fat;
But the good half died and was eaten
 In hell by a lean, gray rat.

Skipwith Cannéll

THE LOVE SONG OF J. ALFRED PRUFROCK

S' io credessi che mia risposta fosse
A persona che mai tornasse al mondo,
Questa fiamma staria senza piú scosse.
Ma perciocchè giammai di questo fondo
Non tornò vivo alcum, s' i' odo il vero,
Senza tema d' infamia ti rispondo.

Let us go then, you and I,
When the evening is spread out against the sky
Like a patient etherized upon a table;
Let us go, through certain half-deserted streets,
The muttering retreats
Of restless nights in one-night cheap hotels
And sawdust restaurants with oyster-shells:
Streets that follow like a tedious argument
Of insidious intent
To lead you to an overwhelming question . . .

Oh, do not ask, "What is it?"
Let us go and make our visit.

In the room the women come and go
Talking of Michelangelo.

The yellow fog that rubs its back upon the window panes,
The yellow smoke that rubs its muzzle on the window panes,
Licked its tongue into the corners of the evening,
Lingered upon the pools that stand in drains,

Let fall upon its back the spot that falls from chimneys,
Slipped by the terrace, made a sudden leap,
And seeing that it was a soft October night,
Curled once about the house, and fell asleep.

And indeed there will be time
For the yellow smoke that slides along the street,
Rubbing its back upon the window panes;
There will be time, there will be time
To prepare a face to meet the faces that you meet;
There will be time to murder and create,
And time for all the works and days of hands
That lift and drop a question on your plate:
Time for you and time for me,
And time yet for a hundred indecisions,
And for a hundred visions and revisions,
Before the taking of a toast and tea.

In the room the women come and go
Talking of Michelangelo.

And indeed there will be time
To wonder, "Do I dare?" and, "Do I dare?"—
Time to turn back and descend the stair,
With a bald spot in the middle of my hair—
(They will say: "How his hair is growing thin!")
My morning coat, my collar mounting firmly to the chin,

My necktie rich and modest, but asserted by a simple pin—
(They will say: "But how his arms and legs are thin!")
Do I dare
Disturb the universe?
In a minute there is time
For decisions and revisions which a minute will reverse.

For I have known them already, known them all:
Have known the evenings, mornings, afternoons,
I have measured out my life with coffee spoons;
I know the voices dying with a dying fall
Beneath the music from a farther room.
So how should I presume?

And I have known the eyes already, known them all—
The eyes that fix you in a formulated phrase.
And when I am formulated, sprawling on a pin,
When I am pinned and wriggling on the wall,
Then how should I begin
To spit out all the butt-ends of my days and ways?
And how should I presume?

And I have known the arms already, known them all—
Arms that are braceleted and white and bare
(But in the lamplight, downed with light brown hair!)
Is it perfume from a dress
That makes me so digress?

Arms that lie along a table, or wrap about a shawl.
And should I then presume?
And how should I begin?

.

Shall I say, I have gone at dusk through narrow streets,
And watched the smoke that rises from the pipes
Of lonely men in shirtsleeves, leaning out of windows? . . .

I should have been a pair of ragged claws
Scuttling across the floors of silent seas.

.

And the afternoon, the evening, sleeps so peacefully!
Smoothed by long fingers,
Asleep . . . tired . . . or it malingers,
Stretched on the floor, here beside you and me.
Should I, after tea and cakes and ices,
Have the strength to force the moment to its crisis?
But though I have wept and fasted, wept and prayed,
Though I have seen my head (grown slightly bald) brought in upon a platter,
I am no prophet—and here's no great matter;
I have seen the moment of my greatness flicker,
And I have seen the eternal Footman hold my coat, and snicker,
And in short, I was afraid.

And would it have been worth it, after all,
After the cups, the marmalade, the tea,

Among the porcelain, among some talk of you and me,
Would it have been worth while
To have bitten off the matter with a smile,
To have squeezed the universe into a ball
To roll it toward some overwhelming question,
To say: "I am Lazarus, come from the dead,
Come back to tell you all, I shall tell you all"—
If one, settling a pillow by her head,
 Should say: "That is not what I meant at all;
 That is not it, at all."

 And would it have been worth it, after all,
Would it have been worth while,
After the sunsets and the dooryards and the sprinkled streets,
After the novels, after the teacups, after the skirts that trail
 along the floor—
And this, and so much more?—
It is impossible to say just what I mean!
But as if a magic lantern threw the nerves in patterns on a
 screen:
Would it have been worth while
If one, settling a pillow or throwing off a shawl,
And turning toward the window, should say: "That is not
 it at all,
 That is not what I meant, at all."

.

 No! I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be;
Am an attendant lord, one that will do

To swell a progress, start a scene or two,
Advise the prince: withal, an easy tool,
Deferential, glad to be of use,
Politic, cautious, and meticulous;
Full of high sentence, but a bit obtuse;
At times, indeed, almost ridiculous—
Almost, at times, the Fool.

I grow old . . . I grow old . . .
I shall wear the bottoms of my trowsers rolled.

Shall I part my hair behind? Do I dare to eat a peach?
I shall wear white flannel trowsers, and walk upon the beach.
I have heard the mermaids singing, each to each.
I do not think that they will sing to me.

I have seen them riding seaward on the waves,
Combing the white hair of the waves blown back
When the wind blows the water white and black.

We have lingered in the chambers of the sea
By seagirls wreathed with seaweed red and brown,
Till human voices wake us, and we drown.

.

T. S. Eliot

COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

THE DEATH OF RUPERT BROOKE

IT is fitting to pause a moment over this symbol of the waste of war. The young poet who died of sunstroke on an English cruiser in the Dardanelles was the finest flower of the race. He was not only a poet of high achievement and higher promise, but a rare spirit; not only a rare spirit, modest, noble-minded, but, in Mr. Yeats' phrase, "the most beautiful young man in England." One of the men fittest to survive and give his strength and beauty to the race is cut down in his proud youth by that ruthless gigantic harvester, modern war. One fallen soldier more, one of millions fallen or doomed, that mediaeval-minded monarchs may try out their illusions with embattled armies.

A year ago Rupert Brooke passed through this country on his way home from the south seas. I remember my first sight of him. For some foolish reason one hardly dares speak of a living man as beautiful, but when death stiffens flesh to marble no casual smile can mock at the word or deny the thrill. Here was "lyric Apollo" indeed, as if freshly made at the dawn of time, and sent to our modern world with a message from the old gods.

However, he was quite unaware of any special divinity; indeed, a somewhat wide acquaintance with poets has rarely shown me one who rated himself and his work so modestly. In July he sent from England the poem, *Retrospect,* which

POETRY printed last October, and the final lines of which now seem premonitory:

O haven without wave or tide!
Silence, in which all songs have died!
Holy book, where hearts are still!
And home at length under the hill!
O mother quiet, breasts of peace,
Where love itself would faint and cease!
O infinite deep I never knew,
I would come back, come back to you,
Find you, as a pool unstirred,
Kneel down by you, and never a word,
Lay my head, and nothing said,
In your hands, ungarlanded;
And a long watch you would keep;
And I should sleep, and I should sleep!

Then came the war. In October the poet, who had joined the second naval brigade, wrote from the royal naval barracks, Chatham:

I'm afraid I shan't do anything more while the war lasts; and we expect it to go on at least a year more, probably two. Afterward I hope to start again. I've been having a great time (and a terrible one, in a way). We, the Naval Brigade, went to Antwerp for the last part of the siege. I'll never forget the sight of hundreds of thousands of refugees,—white, desperate, stunned creatures. There can never have been a nation so wronged and tortured in European memory. . . .

Shelter the refugee muses for a time. Europe is no place for them.

Good luck to you!

The next letter brought the war sonnets printed in our April number. "One, perhaps two, are goodish," the poet wrote; "I doubt if I have time to write any more before I go out again."

In printing the sonnets I felt some regret that they celebrated the old illusions. War, to this young poet-soldier,

was glorified by the romantic glamour which, as it has been made mostly by the arts, must be stripped off by the arts if war is to become as archaic and absurd tomorrow as duelling is today. So long as men think war beautiful, nations will arm and fight; and since, from the dawn of time, the arts have taught that war is beautiful, so from this hour of the most deadly and unjustifiable of wars, they must begin to teach the world the glory of heroic life, the beauty of persistent and devoted service, and the infinite generosity of modern science, modern civilization, in the multiform opportunities it offers for heroism.

However, all the pathetic beauty of the old ideal was incarnate in this young poet and ensainted by his death. He is archetypal of the millions upon millions of proud young men who have gone singing to their death on the world's battlefields, obscure pawns in mighty games played for ends they never questioned. That he died of sunstroke is perhaps the more symbolic; it allies him the more closely with those Homeric heroes whom some god wrapped in golden mist and bore from the bloody field. And so on his fair young brow let us place the ancient laurel, and bear him, "like a soldier," to his tomb.

Young, beautiful, he went singing to the wars,
But the bright sungod would not have it so:
While dreadnoughts hurled the iron bolts of Mars,
Apollo called—how could he choose but go?

H. M.

HARK TO STURGE MOORE

Mr. Sturge Moore's last book, a triologue between three nice men in tweed suits concerning the nature of style and the beautiful, is, so far as I am concerned, a mere annoyance, and I will therefore refrain from reviewing it. (*Hark to These Three,* by T. Sturge Moore—Elkin Mathews.) Good poets are too few and the exacerbations of life are too many. Let me rather remind the reader that Sturge Moore is the author of *The Vinedresser and Other Poems,* of *The Defeat of the Amazons,* and a dozen or so classical plays that will never be popular; and that the best of his work is, I think, permanent for those who know the "Mareotic juice from Coecuban."

I am, reader, tired, as you are also, I doubt not, of the New York school of reviewers who will be forever sizing up poems by gross tonnage, discovering each week a "new Shelley" or a "new Keats" or a "new Whistler." (I even remember one lady who said her husband was known as "the American Whistler.")

Also I am dead tired of a criticism that is forever making comparisons of "magnitude" and never definitions of quality. A pox upon all editors, upon all uniforms and upon the present publishing system. A pox!—are we to have no more individuals!

I have been reasonably meticulous, in these pages, in defining my idea of the classic, in indicating my preference for a straight-running speech, and I may therefore be par-

doned for expressing an idle, unharnessed and unprofessional enjoyment.

The essential thing in a poet is that he build us his world. It may be Prospero's island, it may be the tavern with Falstaff, or the stripped world of Candide, or Florence which has spread its futile reputation into the nether reaches of hell; or it may be the burlesque of Hudibras; but some such reality, or some such phantasm, the author must rear up about us. And after one has sunk one's personal differences, or even made up one's mind that one's personal differences with Mr. Sturge Moore are everlastingly unsettlable, the fact of his magic remains. In the *Chorus of Dorides,* in a dozen other places, it remains:

> Dead, dead, hale youth is dead;
> Broken, bruised, broken, bathed in spray.
> See, see, the hair, the wealth of his head,
> With spoilt wreath-tendrils wed!
> Limp as a dress once gay,
> Which on the shore is found
> Where bathing a child has drowned,
> So lies he white as the spray;
> So white Adonis lay
> Before his whimpering hound;
> So white on mid-sea lone
> Rocked by the billows lay
> Fallen Icarus—Phaethon fallen,
> Through flaming forest, prone,
> Deaf to the wail at dawn,
> To houseless nymph and fawn—
> Deaf where the leaves were ashes,
> All lifeless, white; and so
> Lay Hyacinth, his pillow
> Tragic with purple splashes,
> Deaf to left-handed Woe,

Where breezes through the willow
On beds of blue-bells blow.
Were these not kissed?—not washed with tears?
Did any fond name at their ears
Fail to plead vainly?

.

Dead, dead, poor short-lived lover,
Wasted, wrecked, wasted; day by day
Two careless tides will cover
And roll thee in their spray.
When peacemeal grow thy frail bones white,
Wilt thou through thy worn skull by night
Hear shore-wind sighing?

Sturge Moore is more master of cadence than any of his English contemporaries. If Mr. Yeats has perfect mastery in *Red Hanrahan's Song About Ireland,* and in the verse of *The Wind Among the Reeds,* even his most fervent admirers must grant that Moore has the greater variety of cadences in his quiver, and that he excels his friend in onomatopoeic aptness; in varying and fitting the cadence to its subject emotion.

Lacedaemon, hast thou seen it?
Lacedaemon, Lacedaemon!
From Taygetus the forests
Slope from snows raised far above them!
Lacedaemon rich in corn-lands,
With the grand hill shoulders round them
Blue as lapis in the twilight.

That is both a good and a bad example. It is the Spanish *redondilla* cadence that we know in *Rio verde, rio verde.* He has not escaped rhythmic monotony in these seven lines, but I have quoted the whole seven for the sake of the imagistic vividness in the last one.

He will never be popular in America because of the small-town or "smart-Alec" sense of the superficially comic which pervades that continent. Who with this ever-present "smartness" could get beyond such an opening line as:

We maidens are older than most sheep.

Yet that line opens a quite beautiful poem, and on the whole they are the words most suited for conveying their portion of the effect of the whole. Again the microscopical mind of any reviewer will not be expected to pass over cockney rhymes, whereof there are several most flagrant in this book called *The Vinedresser: ought* and *sort* in one place, *short* and *ought* in another. Such things are like the gritting of a slate-pencil and are no more to be passed over lightly than are the obvious surface faults in Poe's *Helen*. You forgive a poet his sins for the sake of his virtues, "because he hath loved much." But it is a consummate slovenliness of general criticism to see no flaw in the idol merely because *numen inest.*

It is because of the prevalence of slovenly praising, in prefaces, in histories of literature, and by college professors, that we get no fine age of verse. Countless young poets, hearing older authors spoken of always with adulation, get drunk with their beauty, copy their faults, and the art in general suffers.

Mr. Sturge Moore's "beautiful world" is not unlike the world of "H. D."—hellenic, vivid in color; and this despite the fact that they write almost in different tongues, in utterly different metric, and that there is no influence one way or

the other, seeing that Mr. Moore is of an earlier generation (*The Vinedresser* appeared in 1899), and that "H. D." has, to my almost certain knowledge, never read a single line of Sturge Moore. A least she had not when his poems first appeared. So much for future philologists.

As for an audience, I am always at war with the motto on the cover of this magazine. Let me consider Moore's audience. Six years ago Mr. Lawrence Binyon said to me, "Have you ever read Sturge Moore?", and I went back to the British Museum reading room and read the *Defeat of the Amazons,* which I have never forgotten. Though I can remember few phrases, I have the scene and some memory of the rhythm, especially that speech of the running faun beginning

Aie, aie, aie!
Laomedon!

Then there was Maurice Hewlett three years since contending that Moore was the best poet in England, and besides that there is the constant admiration of two such different artists as Mr. W. B. Yeats and Mr. Wyndham Lewis. And that is perhaps public enough for any man in his life-time. At least I should so suspect Mr. Sturge Moore of considering it, for I have never known a man less aware of the circumjacent vulgarity and of the general stew of the world, the "world of letters," etc.

WOODSTOCK MAZE

A crown in her lap; all proud of her bower;
A woman become a child from using power
Her beauty gave her, bounteous gave; and thence

Renewed in petulence and lucky faults;
So fresh, her whole life breathless halts
To see a star fall through immense
High arch'd twilight—
Rosamund peaceful sat and sang,
While the woods lay still and their echoes rang
To the song *Love loves the night.*

A captive to innocence, held there, to wait
Pale, where the paths all led, whence none led straight
Or could help flight, until the queen came up
And told her in a whisper she must die,
Hated, beneath the quiet sky.
Slowly she drained the deep-stained cup,
And still grew white
Slowly, there, where she sat and sang,
While still the wooded echoes rang
To the song *Love loves the night.*

It is our curse to know we are heard. The charm of first books, the reason why poetry is of youth and prose of middle-age, is that despite their faults in execution, the young are for the most part without an audience; they write for their own ears, they are not spoiled by knowing there will be an audience. After a man has a public there is always the curse, the venom, as soon as he has written his verse; and if the gods have no pity the very middle of his thought is interrupted with the thought that too many must hear it. Only the gods' darlings escape this. And Sturge Moore has in this vein at least been greatly favored. *Odi . . . et arceo*—was ever a boast more vain, or an irritated outburst more filled with true aspiration, than this opening of urbanest Horace plagued with all the devils of metropolitan, sycophant praises and auditors! *Arceo!* The foxes and eagles had the better of him. Is there any eyrie so remote, any heart so

hermetic, that it is not reached by the persistent echoes of braying!

Let us then close with a couple of platitudes: Sturge Moore's work is more like to itself than to anybody else's —and that is always an advantage. If *The Vinedresser* is at times reminiscent, it is reminiscent of Blake and of Browning, who are respectively the soundest core of their eras.

Row till the sea-nymphs rise
To ask you why
Rowing you tarry not
To hear them sigh.

Ezra Pound

REVIEWS

Spoon River Anthology, by Edgar Lee Masters. Macmillan.

The other day I was in a little Illinois town on the old canal, and I was surprised to find how much imaginative life had been added to the place by Mr. Masters' *Spoon River Anthology.* Deserted by the tide of progress that followed the building of the new canal, there was an air of memory and regret about the place; a provincial richness and a sense of desolation. The square stone houses, built of lime-stone quarried from the hills, and the old frame houses of the pioneer colonial pattern, seemed to hold in hiding the secret lives of the people of whom Mr. Masters had written. This is the service that Mr. Masters has performed for us—he has given an intensely vital meaning to our immediate human environment. He has done for us what the young Irish writers have done for Ireland.

Not long ago certain English poets were complaining that we had no poets, except Whitman, essentially American in spirit or reflecting American life. But American literary tradition, a tradition more indigenous than that of the colonial New England school, is still in the making. Men like Mr. Robert Frost and Mr. Masters, and like Mr. E. A. Robinson, who may be said to have been the pioneer in this particular field, are contributing to it. It is a significant fact that Mr. Frost has made the characters of a New England community, and Mr. Masters the characters of a little Illinois town, live for us as no American novelist has done since Hawthorne. They have created not "types," but human beings. This is the secret of Mr. Masters' method. In revealing the crisis of each individual life in Spoon River, he reveals the soul of the community.

Of course we have had writers and poets who were distinctly racial in a sense that would appeal to the Londoner —Bret Harte, Mark Twain, Joaquin Miller, or Lowell; but were these men not steeped in that very romanticism the lack of which Mr. Floyd Dell laments in Mr. Masters? And isn't it just this romanticism that has kept the American from expressing the heights or depths of experience? I can not help but feel relieved by the general sense of tragedy that pervades Mr. Masters' book. There is nothing unhealthy or morbid or hopeless about it as there often is about that of European writers. It is simply the sense of the tragedy of broken and wasted lives—of unnecessarily wasted lives. For in spite of death and defeat, Mr. Masters makes

life seem precious. Humorous, squalid and noble at the same time, an affair of broken wings, splendid hopes, draggled aspirations, and smothered beauty, life is yet too amazingly vital to be discarded even by those who have themselves taken the final step to discard it! These people who are dead love life and remember it with regret. Not all of these people, indeed, as one shrewdly suspects, have yet gained the secure repose of the hill at Spoon River! In many cases the tragedy is individual—the defeat of ambition through personal short-sightedness or limitation. But often through the individual histories of these men and women, touched with humor, sarcasm, beauty, pity and terror, Mr. Masters touches also upon larger issues, and a stronger note is struck in the hint of final fulfilment of causes for which the individual perished. Back of the sense of tragedy is a flaming idealism not entirely masked by the cover of sarcastic irony.

I don't know why it is that American people are so averse to satire. The *Spoon River Anthology* reflects American life not in a superficial, but in a deeper, sense. It is deeply rooted in the soil, and a part of its power to move us is in the associations of the past generation that it calls up. But an ample vision of the future beyond the scope of this generation is also presented. We find Mr. Masters' own faith and doubt for the future variously recorded in several of the poems. Both are suggested in this composite picture formed in the brain of Rutherford McDowell, the village photographer:

They brought me ambrotypes
Of the old pioneers to enlarge.
And sometimes one sat for me—
Someone who was in being
When giant hands from the womb of the world
Tore the republic.
What was it in their eyes?—
For I could never fathom
That mystical pathos of drooped eyelids,
And the serene sorrow of their eyes.
It was like a pool of water,
Amid oak trees at the edge of a forest:
Where the leaves fall,
As you hear the crow of a cock
From a far-off farm house, seen near the hills
Where the third generation lives, and the strong men
And the strong women are gone and forgotten.
And these grand-children and great grand-children
Of the pioneers!
Truly did my camera record their faces, too,
With so much of the old strength gone,
And the old faith gone,
And the old mastery of life gone,
And the old courage gone,
Which labors and loves and suffers and sings
Under the sun!

And here is the epitaph of Lincoln's law partner, William H. Herndon, to place beside Mr. E. A. Robinson's fine portrait, *The Master:*

There by the window in the old house
Perched on the bluff, overlooking miles of valley,
My days of labor closed, sitting out life's decline,
Day by day did I look in my memory,
As one who gazes in an enchantress' crystal globe;
And I saw the figures of the past,
As if in pageant glassed by a shining dream,
Move through the incredible sphere of time.
And I saw a man arise from the soil like a fabled giant

And throw himself over a deathless destiny,
Master of great armies, head of the republic,
Bringing together into a dithyramb of recreative song
The epic hopes of a people;
At the same time Vulcan of sovereign fires,
Where imperishable shields and swords were beaten out
From spirits tempered in heaven.
Look in the crystal! See how he hastens on
To the place where his path comes up to the path
Of a child of Plutarch and Shakespeare.
O Lincoln, actor indeed, playing well your part,
And Booth, who strode in a mimic play within the play,
Often and often I saw you,
As the cawing crows winged their way to the wood
Over my house-top at solemn sunsets,
There by my window,
Alone.

The first appreciation of the *Spoon River Anthology*, then running in the St. Louis Mirror, appeared in the October, 1914, number of POETRY. Mr. Ezra Pound in *The Egoist* and Mrs. Eunice Tietjens in *The Chicago Evening Post* were quick to second our praise; but we are now told by our credulous newspapers that Mr. Powys discovered this "aboriginal genius," the author of *Spoon River!* It is pleasant to have one's own opinion ratified, and yet to realize that the initial recognition of an American author was not in this case left to an English critic! *A. C. H.*

Some Imagist Poets—an Anthology. Houghton Mifflin Co.

Although POETRY is ignored in the preface to this volume, our readers will recognize the finest entries of its six poets—covering thirty of the book's seventy-seven printed pages—as having appeared in this magazine, many of them during our first year when no other publisher would look at them. It is pleasing to see so honorable a house as the great Boston firm falling into line behind us, but we should appreciate the compliment more deeply if our primacy were more definitely acknowledged.

Nor do readers of POETRY need that information of the imagistic creed and technique which is now, in scarcely recognizable form, going the rounds of a bewildered press. Over two years ago Messrs. Pound and Flint defined for us the "direct treatment," the stript and exact word, the "sequence of the musical phrase," the "clear image" as opposed to abstractions; and offered *A Few Don'ts by an Imagist* in an effort to bring back poetic technique to that "best tradition" exemplified in Sappho, Catullus, Villon.

This new anthology represents a smaller group of poets than *Des Imagistes* of last year, which also quoted lavishly from POETRY; indeed, its title shows that it does not pretend to include all the imagists. Of the poets so classed in the earlier pamphlet, we miss Messrs. Pound, Cannéll, Williams and Cournos (American), and Messrs. Hueffer, Upward, and Joyce (British). And Mr. D. H. Lawrence is a new entry. The term Imagism becomes somewhat blurred in the

present collection; it loses something of that hard "clear outline" dear to the true imagist.

But all this is preliminary. Having cleared the ground, let us consider the book for what is in it, not for what is out of it. The most authentic and indubitable note of passion, passion fused and fixed in a form of sternly sculpturesque art —like a bas-relief by Bourdelle—is in *A Woman and her Dead Husband,* by Mr. Lawrence. And if this great poem expresses tragic love, not less beautifully does *Fireflies in the Corn* express a dancing passion of delight in fireflies, corn-stalks and other ecstasies of nature, and of fantastic mockery as the woman contrasts these with her lover's dullness. Both these poems, which must not be broken by quotation (they were in POETRY for January, 1914)—both these poems rhyme, and in other respects they may not be quite in accord with imagistic practice; but this is of little consequence except to lovers of labels. They are some of the finest poetry written in this century, and they are of a new kind in that they could not have been written in any other century. Mr. Lawrence gives us his own fire, and cares not whether it respects rules or melts them. And this fire is in every one of his seven poems, even that brief little "image" *Green.*

I do not mean that Mr. Lawrence is the only impassioned poet represented in this volume, or that tragic love is the only emotion which can stir an artist to the depths. Is there not passion in Corot's landscapes, wreathed with dancing nymphs like embodied raptures of nature? Are not Blake-

lock's autumnal sunsets filled with flaming passion too deep for tears? In the same way there is passionate sympathy with nature in Mr. Fletcher's *Blue Symphony,* in Mr. Aldington's *The Poplar,* in H. D.'s *Oread* and *The Garden.* These poems are not "parlor fire-works," as the mercurial Mr. Floyd Dell suggests in *The New Republic,* but vividly imaginative landscapes, painted with rich lights and shadows, and fused with profound feeling.

Indeed, these are mostly painter poets. Painters of the human figure, indoors or out, are suggested by such poems as Miss Lowell's beautiful *Venus Transiens* or Mr. Flint's poignantly intimate *Accident.* The *Venus* makes me think, not of Botticelli, whom it mentions, but of a modern painter of sun-lit sea-foamy nudes, Mr. Childe Hassam. Both artists give us the sparkling iridescence of nature's joy. And Mr. Flint paints the girl in the railway carriage with dark strokes sharply lit, like Mr. Jerome Myers.

In some of the poems the imagistic ecstasy is strained by self-consciousness or blurred by prosiness. Mr. Aldington's *Childhood* is touching and true, but there is little reason, either of rhythm or imagery, for not printing it as prose. So also Miss Lowell's "polyphonic prose" in *The Bombardment* remains for me scientific and artificial, an interesting experiment rather than a new poetic form. And while Mr. Fletcher's *Blue Symphony* is Corot in one of his most lyric moods, *London Excursion* gives the effect of an effort to do too much, a picture unachieved.

Perhaps the very essence of imagism is presented in the poems of H. D. She is less disturbed than her companions by merely human feeling; she stands, in god-like aloofness, for the austerities of art, and one or two of her vivid little drawings rank almost with certain brief and beautiful images achieved by Mr. Pound in his most magical moments, or by Mr. Allen Upward in his *Scented Leaves from a Chinese Jar*. Such things are the butterfly's wing—fugitive, delicate, shot with color, visible a mere instant against the blue.

H.M.

Antwerp, by Ford Madox Hueffer. The Poetry Bookshop, London.

Poems, by John Rodker. Printed by the Author, 1 Osborn Street, Whitechapel.

Sing-Songs of the War, by Maurice Hewlett. The Poetry Bookshop.

When the *inteligencia* of London are hit with a new fashion in art, they are hit hard. They live with it—they think it, dress it, eat it; one may almost imagine the *Nude Descending the Stair* in ice-cream. Pre-Raphaelitism spread its bane over walls, cupboards, chairs, and invented the seamless dresses worn by lank women. Now it is post-impressionism, vorticism, or whatever may be the latest coinage of terms for the new movement.

Mr. Rodker's book has a tasteful spray of ganglia on the cover, designed by Mr. David Bombey, and Mr. Hueffer's

poem an arrangement of forked diagonals, and a soldier represented by the sharp onward thrust of lines. Yet what a relief these are after the perpetual pretty-girl covers of our books and magazines! Unfortunately it is not possible to reproduce the very appropriate head-piece for the middle section of Mr. Hueffer's poem—a poem of great beauty which I wish it were possible to quote in full. I think I have had more lasting enjoyment from this poem than from any that I have seen on the war.

III

For the white-limbed heroes of Hellas ride by upon their horses
Forever through our brains.
The heroes of Cressy ride by upon their stallions;
And battalions and battalions and battalions—
The Old Guard, the Young Guard, the men of Minden and of Waterloo—
Pass, forever staunch,
Stand forever true;
And the small man with the large paunch,
And the gray coat, and the large hat, and the hands behind the back,
Watches them pass
In our minds forever . . .
But that clutter of sodden corses
On the sodden Belgian grass—
That is a strange new beauty.

IV

With no especial legends of marchings or triumphs or duty,
Assuredly that is the way of it,
The way of beauty . . .
And that is the highest word you can find to say of it.
For you cannot praise it with words
Compounded of lyres and swords,
But the thought of the gloom and the rain,

And the ugly coated figure standing beside a drain,
Shall eat itself into your brain:
And you will say of all heroes: "They fought like the Belgians!"
And you will say: "He wrought like a Belgian his fate out of gloom;"
And you will say: "He bought like a Belgian
His doom."
And that shall be an honorable name;
"Belgian" shall be an honorable word,
As honorable as the fame of the sword,
As honorable as the mention of the many-chorded lyre;
And his old coat shall seem as beautiful as the fabrics woven in Tyre.

Much of Mr. Rodker's verse I am frankly quite unable to fathom. It is futuristic—I use the word to describe a certain mingling of the subjective and objective, to which one must submit oneself to get the value of the poems. In other words, the reader must attempt to place himself in the same subjective attitude, and indulge in the same white heat of concentration, upon which the ephemera of the objective world will burst with an importance quite disproportionate to the normal sense. A painter would detect here many variations of the after-image—not necessarily visual however. It is the instability of Mr. Rodker's image that I find confusing. But one reader may find the path easy where another stumbles. *The Mercury Vapor Lamps* gives an impression in verse that might well be conveyed in music by one of the new composers. *London Night,* included in the volume, was published in the December number of POETRY.

My own reaction to Mr. Rodker's verse might be said to be expressed in his *Item:*

You said
your heart was
pieces of
strings
in a
peacock blue satin
bag.

Mr. Hewlett's booklet includes a group of songs very much in the nature of broad-sheet ballads, for they give the familiar homely touch of pathos and humor characteristic of such popular lyrics. Naturally they are enthusiastically pro-British. *A. C. H.*

OUR CONTEMPORARIES

ONCE MORE THE MERCURE DE FRANCE

It is a pleasure to record that the *Mercure de France* resumed publication April 1st. The silence of this enlightened review since the beginning of the war has been a serious loss to international letters, and we welcome once more its fortnightly appreciations of all that is most vital in modern literature.

This first number, naturally, is devoted largely to topics suggested by the war, one of them, on *La Faillite de la "Kultur,"* being contributed by Mr. Henri de Régnier, and a brief word, *Mon Retour à Paris,* by M. Remy de Gourmont. Besides these we have a poem, *Les Baigneuses de Rubens*, by M. Émile Verhaeren, tributes to Charles Péguy and Charles Muller, two French poets killed in battle, and the usual chronicles and criticisms.

CORRESPONDENCE

TO POETRY

On Reading the April number in Exile

With what unseemly, ravenous haste
Time beats at my reluctant heels,
And, where our ways once interlaced,
The breach reveals!

So late it was I worked with you
And was a part of what you were!
I knew the keen, brave dream you knew;
I felt you stir

Like some live thing beneath my hand.
Now gray time thickens in the breach,
And, as self fails, I understand
Your upward reach.

The work goes on, the dream goes on!
We are the tide-waves, nothing more;
Our separate lives beat and are gone
Upon the shore.

The dream goes on! Past peace, past war,
Past life or death, past fate,
Mounts beauty like a virgin star
Inviolate.

Eunice Tietjens

A REJOINDER

Editor of POETRY: Mr. Leroy Titus Weeks (*vide Correspondence* for April) mistakes my meaning because, like many other people, he "goes off" before he has applied

himself diligently to understand what he reads. It is his function, as he says in one place, to "stand bewildered," or as he says in another, "to smear," but he mistakes when he uses metre, and mistakes even more gravely when he accuses me of optimism, the vulgarest of American vices, saying that I expect the world to go right when I say "Gee!" That is an error. I am boring my little hole in the adamantine stupidity of England, America, New Zealand and a few places elsewhere. I even enjoy the job. The effects are seen even in Mr. L. T. W.'s *vers libre,* for his words are in the normal order. True, his parodies are unimportant as parodies, and I could, in general, advise him and the rest of the American parodists of my work to leave off until they have studied the very excellent parodies made by Mr. Richard Aldington. Mr. Aldington is himself a poet, he knows something about imagism, he has taken the art seriously and made a study of various poets and periods; whereas my American parodists have for the most part studied neither me nor anyone else.

Tanti ringraziamenti! *Ezra Pound*

NOTES

Of the poets represented in this number, Messrs. Carman, Ficke and Cannéll are well known to our readers. Mr. Carman's latest book is *Earth Deities and Other Rhythmic Masques,* written in collaboration with Mrs. Mary Perry King; and Mr. Ficke's is *The Man on the Hilltop and Other Poems:* both volumes being published by Mitchell Kennerley. Mr. Cannéll is now living in New York, having returned with his family from Paris at the outbreak of the war.

Mr. William Griffith, of New York, now editor of the National Sunday Magazine, is the author of *The House of Dreams* and *City Views and Visions.*

Georgia Wood Pangborn (Mrs. H. L.), of Caldwell, N. J., has contributed much verse to magazines, but has not yet published a volume.

Of the three poets who make their first appearance, Dorothy Dudley (Mrs. Henry B. Harvey), of Chicago, who is a sister of Miss Helen Dudley, an earlier contributor, has published nowhere else as yet. This is true also of "Ajan Syrian," who, born twenty-eight years ago on the Syrian desert, has studied at Columbia University, and is now the adopted son and employe of Mr. Gajor M. Berugjian, of Brooklyn. Mr. T. S. Eliot is a young American poet resident in England, who has published nothing hitherto in this country.

.

The editor regrets to record a misprint in the May number. The young German poet, whose recent death in battle Mr. Stork informed us of, was Georg Trakl, not Frakl.

Also, Mr. Pound has just discovered a misprint in his second *Renaissance* article in the March number. Page 284, line 10, *most dependent* should read *least dependent.*

BOOKS RECEIVED

Original Verse:

Spoon River Anthology, by Edgar Lee Masters. Macmillan.

Cathay, by Ezra Pound. Elkin Mathews.

Japanese Impromptus, by Clifford and Daphe Bax. Abbots Hill Press.

THE NEW POETRY SERIES. Houghton, Mifflin Co.

The Winning Fan, by Lawrence Binyon.

Irradiations: Sand and Spray, by John Gould Fletcher.

Japanese Lyrics, Translated by Lafcadio Hearn.

Some Imagist Poets, An Anthology.

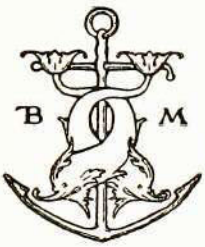
A Florentine Cycle and Other Poems, by Gertrude Huntington McGiffert. Putman's.

The Glen Path, by Samuel Theodore Kidder. Sherman, French & Co.
Love's Creed, by Albert Edmund Trombly. Sherman, French & Co.
A Boy's Will, by Robert Frost. Henry Holt & Co.
North of Boston, by Robert Frost. Henry Holt & Co.
Warp and Woof, by L. Pierce Clark. Hillacre Bookhouse.
Vanishing Roads, by Richard Le Gallienne. Putnam's.
Poems, by Brian Hooker. Yale University Press.
Lands Across the Sea, Sonnets in Praise of King Albert and His Belgians. Printed at the Industrial School for Crippled Children, 241 St. Botolph St., Boston.
Visions of the Dusk, by Fenton Johnson. Trachtenberg Co., New York.
The Man on the Hilltop, by Arthur Davison Ficke. Mitchell Kennerley.
War-Time, by Owen Seaman. Constable & Co., London.
The King of the Jews, A Sacred Drama, From the Russian of The Grand Duke Constantine of Russia, by Victor E. Marsden, M. A. Funk & Wagnalls Co.

Anthologies:
The Call of the Open, A Little Anthology of Contemporary and Other Verse, Compiled by Leonard Stowell. Adam & Charles Black, London.
Nature's Moods. A Little Anthology of Verse, Compiled by Leonard Stowell. Adam & Charles Clack.

Tranlations:
The Divine Comedy, Translated by Henry Johnson. Yale University Press.

Biographies and Essays:
Rabindranath Tagore, A Biographical Study, by Ernest Rhys. Macmillan.
Rabindranath Tagore, The Man and His Poetry, by Basanta Koomar Roy. Dodd, Mead & Co.
The Spirit of Japanese Poetry, by Yone Noguchi. E. P. Dutton & Co.
The Need For Art in Life, by I. B. Stoughton Holborn. G. Arnold Shaw.



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—*Literary Digest, February 13, 1915.*

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To have great poets
there must be great audiences too.

—Whitman.

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Poetry

A Magazine of Verse

Edited by Harriet Monroe

JULY, 1915

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Poems Frances Shaw
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Haunted Reaping—The Muse in Church Leyland Huckfield
The Return Louise Ayres Garnett
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Fire of Snow—In the Wind Clark Ashton Smith
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Poetry
A Magazine of Verse

VOL. VI
No. IV

JULY, 1915

POLONIUS AND THE BALLAD SINGERS

A GAUNT-BUILT woman and her son-in-law—
A broad-faced fellow, with such flesh as shows
Nothing but easy nature—and his wife,
The woman's daughter, who spills all her talk
Out of a wide mouth, but who has eyes as gray
As Connemara, where the mountain-ash
Shows berries red indeed: they enter now—
Our country singers!

"Sing, my good woman, sing us some romance
That has been round your chimney-nooks so long
'Tis nearly native; something blown here
And since made racy—like yon tree, I might say,
Native by influence if not by species,
Shaped by our winds. You understand, I think?"

"I'll sing the song, sir."

To-night you see my face—
Maybe nevermore you'll gaze
On the one that for you left his friends and kin;
For by the hard commands
Of the lord that rules these lands
On a ship I'll be borne from Cruckaunfinn!

Oh, you know your beauty bright
Has made him think delight
More than from any fair one he will gain;
Oh, you know that all his will
Strains and strives around you till
As the hawk upon his hand you are as tame!

Then she to him replied:
I'll no longer you deny,
And I'll let you have the pleasure of my charms;
For to-night I'll be your bride,
And whatever may betide
It's we will lie in one another's arms!

"You should not sing
With body doubled up and face aside—
There is a climax here—'It's we will lie'—
Hem—passionate! And what does your daughter sing?"

"A song I like when I do climb bare hills—
'Tis all about a hawk."

No bird that sits on rock or bough
Has such a front as thine;

ICU

No king that has made war his trade
Such conquest in his eyne!
I mark thee rock-like on the rock
Where none can see a shape.
I climb, but thou dost climb with wings,
And like a wish escape,
She said—
And like a wish escape!

No maid that kissed his bonny mouth
Of another mouth was glad;
Such pride was in our chieftain's eyes,
Such countenance he had!
But since they made him fly the rocks,
Thou, creature, art my quest.
Then lift me with thy steady eyes,
If then to tear my breast,
She said—
If then to tear my breast!

"The songs they have
Are the last relics of the feudal world:
Women will keep them—byzants, doubloons,
When men will take up songs that are as new
As dollar bills. What song have you, young man?"

"A song my father had, sir. It was sent him
From across the sea, and there was a letter with it,
Asking my father to put it to a tune
And sing it all roads. He did that, in troth,
And five pounds of tobacco were sent with the song

To fore-reward him. I'll sing it for you now—
The Baltimore Exile."

The house I was bred in—ah, does it remain?
Low walls and loose thatch standing lone in the rain,
With the clay of the walls coming through with its stain,
Like the blackbird's left nest in the briar!

Does a child there give heed to the song of the lark,
As it lifts and it drops till the fall of the dark,
When the heavy-foot kine trudge home from the paurk,
Or do none but the red-shank now listen?

The sloe-bush, I know, grows close to the well,
And its long-lasting blossoms are there, I can tell,
When the kid that was yeaned when the first ones befell
Can jump to the ditch that they grow on!

But there's silence on all. Then do none ever pass
On the way to the fair or the pattern or mass?
Do the gray-coated lads drive the ball through the grass
And speed to the sweep of the hurl?

O youths of my land! Then will no Bolivar
Ever muster your ranks for delivering war?
Will your hopes become fixed and beam like a star?
Will they pass like the mists from your fields?

The swan and the swallows, the cuckoo and crake,
May visit my land and find hillside and lake.
And I send my song. I'll not see her awake—
I'm too old a bird to uncage now!

"Silver's but lead in exchange for songs,
But take it and spend it."

"We will. And may we meet your honor's like
Every day's end."

"A tune is more lasting that the voice of the birds."

"A song is more lasting than the riches of the world."

Padraic Colum

NOTE. *The last stanza in the first ballad sung is a fragment of an old country song; the rest of it, with the other two ballads, is invented. But they are all in the convention of songs still sung by strolling ballad-singers. I have written the common word for pasture-field "paurk" so as not to give a wrong association: it might be written "park," as Burns, using the word in the same sense, writes it. "Paurk" or "park" is Gaelic for pasture field, and is always used in Irish country speech in that sense. The two last lines spoken are translations of a Gaelic phrase which has been used by Dr. Douglas Hyde as a motto for his collection of Connacht love songs.* P. C.

POEMS

THE RAGPICKER

The Ragpicker sits and sorts her rags:
Silk and homespun and threads of gold
She plucks to pieces and marks with tags;
And her eyes are ice and her fingers cold.

The Ragpicker sits in the back of my brain;
Keenly she looks me through and through.
One flaming shred I have hidden away—
She shall not have my love for you.

THE BECKONING MOON

I went to the hills for courage,
But the hills have made me weak;
I went to the hills for high resolves
And the wisest words to speak.

There were bonfires down in the valley,
And a beckoning moon in a tree;
So I sped a flame-winged messenger
To call you back to me.

THE CITY LIGHTS FROM A SKYSCRAPER

From my high window at the fall of night,
I see the low-hung firmament of light:

Like port-holes of a ship afloat in space
Or danger signals in a hidden place;

An iridescent serpent with black jaws;
A banner tattered in a giant's cause;

A sun-touched river winding through the gloom;
Wild writing on the heavens of a doom;

Or just the cottage-candles in a wood
Where children play together and are good.

THE HARP OF THE WIND

My house stands high—
Where the harp of the wind
Plays all day,
Plays all night;
And the city light
Is far away.

Where hangs the harp that the winds play?—
High in the air—
Over the sea?

The long straight streets of the far-away town,
Where the lines of light go sweeping down,
Are the strings of its minstrelsy.

And the harp of the wind
Gives to the wind
A song of the city's tears;
Thin and faint, the cry of a child,
Plaint of the soul unreconciled,
A song of the passing years.

THE ORGAN ANGELS

They gather the winds that they may sound
His greater glory through the vaulted sky;
They make soft melodies to flow together
Before God, a mighty stream.

SILENT ONES

I like silent people.
I like to hear them speak,
Because their voices come from the silences
Of their own souls.
I seem to hear the sound
Of windless forests
And of still waters,
Which wrapt the earth before the day of man.
They know not, however, what they speak;
But I, who dwell in the roar of many streets—
I who listen, hear.

THREE VOICES

The Tree:
A wind of pain and longing
Strips my boughs of their spring-time.
I bow, and rock, and sweep the ground;
Then, in the silence, hold me listening.
Is this the after-calm in life,
Or is it death?

The Spirit Within:
I loved a warrior once,
And gave my heart in the spring-time.
Lonely I sought the whole world o'er
For one glance more. Unseeing, he passed by,
And then I laid me down within this tree
And slept.

The Wind:
Bow, bow your branches, O tree,
And sigh exceedingly that the Spirit within
May have memories of me.
For I am he who passed her by
In the spring-time.

Frances Shaw

O BROTHER TREE

O brother tree! O brother tree! Tell to me, thy brother,
The secret of thy life,
The wonder of thy being.

My brother tree, my brother tree,
My heart is open to thee—
Reveal me all thy secrets.

Beloved tree, beloved tree,
I have shattered all my pride.
I love thee, brother, as myself.
Oh, explain to me thy wonders.

Beloved one, adored one,
I will not babble of it among fools—
I will tell it only to the unspoiled:
Reveal to me thy being.

I have watched thy leaves in sunshine,
I have heard them in the storm.
My heart drank a droplet of thy holy joy and wonder,
One drop from the ocean of thy wonder.

I am thy humble brother—I am thine own.
Reveal thy life to me,
Reveal thy calm joy to me,
Reveal to me thy serene knowledge.

THE BIRD

From a branch
The bird called:

I hold your heart!
I wash it,
And scour it
With bits of song
Like pebbles;
And your doubts
And your sorrows
Fall—drip, drip, drip—
Like dirty water.
I pipe to it
In little notes
Of life clear as a pool,
And of death
Clearer still;
And I swoop with it
In the blue
And in the nest
Of a cloud.

Max Michelson

HAUNTED REAPING

Out we go in the dusk of morn
 Over the hills to the reaping.
Our sickles crash on the golden corn
 When the rest of earth is sleeping.
Bending and bowing, bending and bowing,
 Gathering in and striking free,
Gripping the sheaf with the sickle and knee
 And laying it down for the tying.

The dim, dark hills are all around,
 The silence breeds a sullen dread,
Our sickle strokes like shrieks resound
 In chambers of the murdered dead.
But one dull star stays overhead,
 The waning moon seems all awry.
The dying night is loth to die
 Though in the east the mists are red.

Over the stubble chill winds creep
 Like breaths from a dead world blowing,
God! it is awesome so to reap
 With such strange fancies growing.
Bending and bowing, bending and bowing,
 Gathering in and striking free,
Gripping the sheaf with sickle and knee,
 And laying it down for the tying.

My father reaps six feet before
With hairy arms as hard as steel.
I hear the corn as oft of yore
Before his whirlng sickle reel;
And, God, what wild, mad horrors steal!—
Bidding me take too long a stride,
And drive my sickle in his side,
And grind his face beneath my heel.

I dread this brooding, awful morn
With its haunted hush dismaying—
It seems as though pale souls newborn
Our curved wet blades were slaying.
Bending and bowing, bending and bowing,
Gathering in and striking free,
Gripping the sheaf with the sickle and knee
And laying it down for the tying.

My father's beard is grizzled gray—
It trails like mist in heavy wind.
He was three-score yesterday,
And yet I reap six feet behind.
Lean he is, and bent, and lined,
And he has held me many years;
And still I toil in hate and tears,
And still he swears that he is kind.

Ah, God, will morning never break?
I know he is old and loving,

Yet I hear with every stroke I make
A demon with me moving;
Bending and bowing, bending and bowing,
Gathering in and striking free,
Gripping the sheaf with sickle and knee
And laying it down for the tying.

At last! The morning comes at last:
The hills are rich with filtered gold,
And through the vales a glory vast
In glowing might is swiftly rolled.
And hard my father's hand I hold,
And, standing 'midst the gleaming corn,
With him thank Heaven for the morn—
With lips that still are gray and cold!

THE MUSE IN CHURCH

The gates of brass are closed
That guard the ivory altar;
The great arched rafters frown on thee
Who art the harlot's daughter.
With lips like a carmine rose,
With robes like orchids rare,
With breath like spices delicate
That languorous pagans bear;
With thy petal cheeks aglowing,

And with thy white knees showing,
And shy, soft eyes that falter—
Go hence, enticing demon child,
Thou hast not beads nor psalter.

Leyland Huckfield

THE RETURN

Back to the voice that sang me,
 Back to the breath of birth;
Back to the bells that rang me
 From heavenly heights to earth;
Back to the hand that wrought me;
 Back to the primal sod;
Back to the mind that thought me—
 Home to the breast of God.

Louise Ayres Garnett

ECCE MYSTERIUM

The voice of the city:

Boy, there in the candle light
Take your silver flute and sing.
See! Outside the lamps are bright
Burning, flashing, rioting.

Sounds are in the city street—
Take your silver flute and sing!
Music of a million feet,
Plodding, dancing, faltering.

The boy takes up his flute and points toward the river:

Passers-by, O passers-by,
Come to the rim of the windy sky!

See you the silver, shimmering street
Where the bricks and river meet?
There's the path I go to follow—oh, to follow!
Up the dusk-dimmed mountain's hollow,
Where little roads lead higher, higher,
Into the white, white heart of fire.

Passers-by, O passers-by,
Do you hear the sob in the wind-wide sky?

A hurdy-gurdy plays between the tenements, and a balloon man passes with bright red, blue and orange balloons tugging at their strings. The voice of the city—roaring:

Boy, snuff out your candle light,
Bid your flute now cease to sing.
See!—outside the lamps are bright—
Blazing, flashing, rioting.

Rebecca Park Lawrence

FIRE OF SNOW

Pale fire of snow had lit the dusk for me:
 Astray with mind half-consciously intent,
 I had not thought the wood so imminent.
Those lofty trees upstanding wearily,
Darker than sleep, more mute with mystery
 Than far-off death, where questing dreams are spent
 With stars and winds, appeared they as I went
Therein, and paused in old expectancy.

Pale fire of snow had lit the dusk for me;
 But the black stillness held where once the wind
 Had parted boughs in music, that the gleam
 Of stars might enter. All was strangely blind,
More dull than midnight 'neath the middle sea;
 Filled with the silence of a perished dream.

IN THE WIND

Lo, in the wind what legions pass,
 Phantom, innumerable, fleet!
 Watching, I dream their pauseless feet
Are lights that run upon the grass.

Clark Ashton Smith

COTTON FIELDS

Like nets of brown, by fisher folk
 Spread out to dry in wind and sun,
While in the harbor idly wait
 The boats for schools of fish to run:

So lie the ripened cotton fields
 Along the slopes. The sun has browned
And curled their leaves; the rows stretch out
 Enlaced with knots along the ground.

Above the rough red field of earth
 Soft flecks of white droop from the bolls.
Far off the groups of pickers loom
 Like burdened, disembodied souls—

Detached but not released, who haunt
 The fields and hover near the soil:
Gray gleaners in the weary rows,
 Entangled in an endless toil.

Madeline Yale Wynne

EARLY MORNING AT BARGIS

Clear air and grassy lea,
 Stream-song and cattle-bell—
Dear man, what fools are we
 In prison-walls to dwell!

To live our days apart
 From green things and wide skies,
And let the wistful heart
 Be cut and crushed with lies!

Bright peaks!—And suddenly
 Light floods the placid dell,
The grass-tops brush my knee:
A good crop it will be,
 So all is well!
Oh, man, what fools are we
 In prison-walls to dwell!

Hermann Hagedorn

THE OLD SOUTH

To H. D.

High streaks of cottony-white cloud fill the sky. The sun slips out of the swamp, swinging his heavy-jewelled mace before his face as he plays with the ripples that gurgle under the rotting cypress-knees. The breeze lifts the Spanish moss an instant, and then is still. The sun tosses dew over the ragged palmetto-leaves. Aslant on a gust of warm breeze from the broiling savannah, the song of a mocking-bird floats, a fierce scurry of notes, through the air. The sun seems to be kindling a flare at every point of the horizon. Grasshoppers, crickets, cicadas, everything that flits or skims, tunes and trills its shrill violin. Butterflies flutter, broken motes of color; humming-bird and dragon-fly dart green streaks through the quivering sky.

The river rolls boiling and frothing through the lowlands. It is weary of the dull stiff mud-banks that flake away before it in sticky chips; weary of the turbid masses of mud that it must scour away to make its path down to the sea. It gulps and seethes horribly with hungry angry lips, fretting first one bank, then another, as it goes sliding and flopping down the long twisted bends in the fierce glare of morning; deceived no longer at each marsh-outlet and creek and bayou-mouth into thinking that here and not further south must be the clear blue water it seeks, where its heavy burden may fall in peace. The river goes slapping, lapping, rustling the canes

of the brake and the motionless cypress trees. A mocking-bird's song floats down before it in the breeze.

It is noon, and the carnival, king of fools, rules the city. A beautiful woman, her face cold, haughty, expressionless, the fire in her eyes half hidden, goes dancing down the street with a man whose shape is like an ape. Her feet stir the dust, and it glitters as it settles in streams over her shoulders, like slipping confetti-showers. She is a flower over-weary of the sun. Her perfume is almost gone, and the fever will soon snap her from her stalk and toss her into the tomb. Brass drums toll to her tripping movement. Her skirts sway. Amid their flickering spangles plays a satyr grinning at the multitude. He tears off her frills, and flings them into the gutter choked with filth. Her half-naked form writhes and recoils like a tree before the storm.

The river frowns and lours, for a heavy, fuming dull blue shower races gloomily above it from the southward. As it goes, it throws out at the trees tentacles of curled coppery lightning that enlace and line the branches, and send them crashing downwards with dull powdery explosions of muffled thunder. The river lashes itself into fits, smashing the bank with maddened fists, as it spins the quivering steamer around and nearly sends it reeling aground. It growls, it howls, it shouts its terror of the forest, whose broken logs topple into it with a great splash, swirling and whirling, sucked and crashing in sudden black somersaults,

while the storm roars and grumbles away with spattered hail-bullets and noise of affray. Now the forest groans and drips and shrieks with rain that whistles through its branches. Every trickle, every pool, every creek is full. The choked-up torrent overflows, and covers miles on miles of furrows and woods with endless glaring wastes of water. A gaunt pine falls with a sigh and a splash.

Slowly the river resumes its patient march through the lowlands. Now autumn comes, and afternoon seems throwing gray filaments of haze from tree to tree. The old plantation sleeps, for it has nothing else to do. Live oaks are towered about it, drooping heavily, weary of holding up lusty green leaves from year to year. In graves under the live oaks many are sleeping. They have slipped from the dream of life to the dream of death. Perhaps they died for a woman's sake, for a sigh, a chance word, a look, a letter, for nothing or for a song that men sing. What matter? Life is a dream; to-day, tomorrow, yesterday, it is the same. Along old floors, underneath mouldering doors, blow light gusts of wind stirring the dust. A mouse cheeps in a corner. Old age creeps upon us and life is gray. The old plantation moulders, day on day. Soon there will be gaps in the floors, and the doors will swing open to all. Let us doze on the levee and feel the breeze as it slips down the river racing past us.

The river runs very fast, for it is bearing sodden logs, like broken lives. The sleepy vultures line the gray cotton-

woods that tower above its banks. To them, too, life is a dream. This morning they tore the rank carrion of a dead horse that floated down to them. Death does not matter, for life is defeat, but it is very sweet to have plenty to eat and to sleep in the sunlight. Sleeping and waking, and sleeping again, that is how one learns to live without pain. Let autumn throw dim filaments of regret from tree to tree. Leaves may drop slowly, but the live-oak which drops not its leaves at all is the tree that is planted on graves.

> Immortal death is very sweet
> When brown leaves fill the dripping gap
> Of a broken vault, and the frightened feet
> Of mice pit-patter, and owls flap
> Out to the cool moonshiny night—
> Which scatters crushed jewels down the river,
> Where trees, dumb-stricken ghosts in flight,
> Chatter and shake against each other.

Tinkle-tinkle-drop—the rain that filters through the leaky roof. Under the colonnade, where slaves were sold and bars clinked with gold, runs a tiny stream of water through the dust. Was that a door slamming, or only a torn hanging that flapped? Who knows? Perhaps it was two ghosts who chattered together through agued lips and rattling teeth. Not a dusty bottle in the bar. Marks of muddy boots on the smashed marble. Wind that laughs insanely up the spiral stairways, down the floorless corridors. Let us go, for rain is dropping and the roof is leaking, and I seem to hear a gray frog hopping, while yonder door is

creaking as if someone were locked behind it and were whispering to get out. Let us go, for the ceiling sags and will soon be falling, and a black spider is crawling past my face, and rags are drifting about on the floor. Let us go, for a crazy deaf woman, with a bent stick, threatens us in quavering voice, declaring she will strike us for daring to enter her palace. Let us go, and not come back any more. The dead are best dead and forgotten.

The river rolls through fields blossoming with cotton day after day. In a crazy cabin someone is crooning a song. The sun lifts his long jewelled mace an instant, in careless, lazy fingers before his face, and lets it slip away again. Aslant on a chill scurry of rain floats a mocking-bird's jangled song. It dies away and leaves only silence, half-enclosing the monotonous drone of a sad hymn of despair which a sleepy negro is humming to himself from nowhere.

NEW YORK

To Richard Aldington

Out of the black granite she is rising surprising as sunrise over the head of the Sphinx, glittering towers coated in linked scales that seem as if they might melt away—they are so pale—but that day pours multitudes about them to smile and to threaten, to sin and to 'scape the reckoning, to coagu-

late in iron knots against fate, to blot out life's misery with rejoicing, to clamor and to pray.

Restless hammers are carving new cities from the stagnant skies.

Beneath, the earth is propped and caverned; monstrous halls drop with vaulted echoing roofs dripping and sorrowful far below; the bells toll and the trains start slowly, clanging, shaking the earth and the sad towers above them as they go banging their cargo of lost ones towards the secret gates of the sea; falling, falling with thunder and flame roaring and crawling, shooting and dying away.

Restless hammers are carving new cities from the stagnant skies.

Aloft, red girders of riveted steel hang motionless over the abyss. Down below the traffic slides, and from precipitous sides unroll golden threads, like spiders contriving, carrying their freight. Men with hammers are striving to hack new projections on the edifice: and from the last impenetrable overhanging beam, a man is dangling on his belly guiding the weight. The clouds explode in hissing ripples of snow about him; the skies are dim and the stream of life falls through them sighing, like wheat that crashes into the hopper. But the last pinnacles eat into the clouds and from their bronze sides pours down the day, sweeping away the sordid flood of men in streams of weeping glory.

New York

Restless hammers are carving new cities from the stagnant skies.

Screaming and flickering, like loosened floods of blue flame, the streets run together amid the houses that huddle and leap and lower over them. The houses quiver with rage and heat from heads to feet; the façades seem wavering, toppling, tearing with their weight: the glaring panes bulge outwards, and the bent red girders ooze away beneath them. But above it all, above all the chaos, the struggle and the loss, the clouds part. Ivory and gold, heart of light petrified, bold and immortally beautiful, lifts a tower like a full lily stalk, with crammed pollen-coated petals, flame calyx, fretted and carven. White phoenix that beats its wings in the light, shrill ecstasy of leaping lines poised in flight, partaker of joy in the skies, mate of the sun.

Restless hammers are carving new cities from the stagnant skies.

John Gould Fletcher

THE YOUNGER BARDS

That delightfully whimsical anthologist, Mr. E. V. Lucas, has recently stated that contemporary England has produced but two singers whose verse may be called magical —Walter de la Mare and Ralph Hodgson. Yet there is a nest of singing birds in England before whom Mr. De la Mare and Mr. Hodgson, being wise and accomplished poets, bow humbly. And every year about twenty new voices swell their number. If the essential magic of poetry is to be found anywhere, it is in these unpremeditated verses:

Dark and dreary was the night,
 Not any star did gleam,
But over the hills a mysterious light
 Came like a fearful dream.

And you could hear the maiden singing
 A sweet and old, old song,
And the rafters of the hall were ringing
 While she was singing long.

And now there came an ancient knight
 A-riding up the hill,
And he would stop and think of the fight
 That the maid was singing still.

Donald Turner, being only twelve years old, is wiser than Wordsworth. He has no need to ask self-consciously: "Will no one tell me what she sings?" He knows. He casually tossed off these lines without assistance one day in ten minutes. It was suggested that he should write a poem on the word *Hall,* which is the surname of one of his playmates, and as a recreation from study he produced these quite magical lines.

His friend, Donald Wakeling, who is also twelve years old, and who has never read Blake, was prompted by the word *Cloudland* to write a poem which no anthologist in the future can afford to overlook:

High up in cloudland,
Ever so high,
You hear the birds whistle,
And the lark his cry.

High up in cloudland,
Ever so high,
You hear the wind howl,
And the old moon sigh.

Who taught this little boy to hear "the old moon sigh?"

These lyrics, chosen as representative rather than exceptional, are the work of small boys in the Perse Grammar School at Cambridge, England. They are the result of systematic encouragement on the part of a teacher who believes that every child is a poet until he outgrows his childhood, and that the only spur needed to produce creative work is the encouragement of the imagination and of a boy's faith in his own creative powers.

Such poems as these, and many more like them, force us to ask ourselves whether the essential magic of poetry is not, after all, identical with the vision of childhood, and if so, whether we are not squandering the larger share of our imaginative inheritance by neglecting childhood's creative powers.

The experience of Mr. H. Caldwell Cook, the teacher of these boys, has been that every boy is a potential poet;

that if left to his own devices until his poem is finished, it will be a better poem than if he is interrupted; and that no little boy can correct the faults in his poem, but that he can write a new poem in which these faults tend to disappear. The poems which I have quoted have undergone no revision by the master. It is also Mr. Cook's experience that when his boy poets outgrow their childhood the majority lose their poetic faculty. The important minority, however, have found their vocations early, and developed many years sooner than would otherwise have been the case.

Mr. Cook advocates a minimum of technical instruction in prosody, for the best work is done with the simplest rhythms and vocabulary. He encourages the composition of poetry in the spirit of play, and it is his belief, founded on results, that intuition is at least of equal value with tuition.

The best of these poems are the normal play of normal matter-of-fact boys. That their intuitions have no background of experience is the most wonderful fact about their work. Adrian Tuffield, with all the sage wisdom of his twelve years, can feel intuitively what he tells you in the last couplet of *The Skylark:*

> He clears his voice with a sip of the dew
> That lies on the grass when the day is new;
> Then spreads his wings and soars on high,
> Till he's naught but a speck in the vast blue sky.
>
> His musical notes come fast and free,
> In a strain of sweetest melody;
> He pours them out so rich and clear,
> That this thrilling song the world may hear.

To guard the nest his mate must stay,
But her heart is cheered by his roundelay;
When sunset comes with its rosy glow,
He'll leave his heaven for his love below.

And Douglas Simmonds, who claims eleven years, sings disillusionment with consummate artlessness in this *Envoy* which we cannot call a Song of Experience because of the author's tender age.

The sun's last ray has left the sky,
The red has vanish'd fast,
And now to rest the birds skim by—
These are the very last.

The wind moans through the trees all bare
Playing a mournful tune,
And now comes out with icy stare
Night's mistress, Lady Moon.

It is this very foreknowledge of childhood which we have been permitting to slip away. *Edward J. O'Brien*

To emphasize Mr. O'Brien's conclusions, the editor offers also the following two groups of poems by children. Alice O. Henderson, the daughter of William P. and Alice Corbin Henderson, of Chicago, dictated her imagistic poems, in exactly their present form, between her sixth and eighth years. In the poems of Richard Untermeyer, who is now seven, some of the phrases were transposed, and rhymes added, by his father, Mr. Louis Untermeyer.

DICK

AS TO HEAVEN

Well, Heaven's hard to understand—
But it's a kind of great big land
 All full of gold and glory;
With rivers green and pink and red,
And houses made of gingerbread
 Like in the fairy story.

The floors they use are made of clouds;
And there are crowds and crowds and crowds
 Who sing and dance till seven.
But then they must all keep still because
God and the Dream-man and Santa Claus
 Sleep in the big House of Heaven.

God, he sleeps on the first two floors,
And the Dream-man sleeps above him and snores,
 A tired out story-teller;
And Santa Claus, who hates the noise,
He sleeps on the roof with all of his toys;
 And the angels live in the cellar.

Now, the angels never sleep a wink;
They're much too busy to stop to think
 Or play on harps and guitars.
They're always cleaning the sun at night,
And all day long, to keep it bright,
 They polish the moon and the stars.

They clean the streets and they tidy the rooms,
And they sweep out heaven with a million brooms,
 And they hurry each other when they nod.
And they work so fast that they almost fall—
But God just sits and never works at all;
 And that's because he's God!

AS TO GOD

Well, God does nothing all day long
But he sits and sits in his chair.
His face is as silver and big as the moon,
And he wears all the stars in his hair.
He's very large and happy and he's very, very old;
And half his hair is purple and the other half is gold.

He wears no crown, but a big tall hat
With feathers three miles high;
And they have a hundred colors that are far more bright
Than all the other colors in the sky.
And they're tied to his hat with a kind of velvet rag—
And right in the middle of them all he wears a great, big,
American flag.

AS TO TRUTHS

They always said the moon was far away,
A hundred miles or more up on the skies;
They said he never could come down to play;
They said a lot of things that sounded wise:
But they were lies.
So when they said the moon is dead
I did not even shake my head;
I only laughed because I know
It isn't so.

Only the other night
I watched and saw how light
He leaped down from the skies.
And then, with crinkling eyes,
That seemed to say, "I'm coming,"
He danced and started humming
So gaily and so brightly
That Wendy, who sleeps lightly,
(She's our canary) woke
And scolded when she spoke.
But on he came—so near
That he could almost peer

Into my room and see
Wendy, the toys and me.
Closer he came, until
His hands were on the sill—
They stretched and tried to get
My pail, my soldier set,
And, as he touched my broom,
He jumped into the room.
I knew then right away
He had come down to play—
And so without a word
(For mother might have heard),
Making no talk or noise,
We played with all my toys.
I never had such fun
Before with anyone.

After awhile he had to go—
I tired him, I'm afraid;
And then I knew why I liked him so
When he played.

For his face—as fat as a face could be—
Was jolly, and powdered white;
And I knew why the stars had to wink when he
Laughed all night.

I saw him dancing along a wall,
And jumping lightly down—
And I knew he wasn't a moon at all,
But a clown!

So when they tell me corn-starch makes you strong,
And sitting still is good for tired eyes;
I think that very likely they are wrong;
And lots of other things that sound so wise
Are only lies.
I think about the way they said
The moon was far away—and dead;
And then I laugh because I know
What isn't so!

Richard Untermeyer

RIBBONS IN THE SUN

I

The flowers are growing,
And every day I see them.
My heart is growing.
Like the chimney I see a lot of smoke;
I bet it's hot in the house.
I know I see you.

Musical day, music is going to be at the fair—
With Masquerinis in it,
And lots of people at the jostra;
The people sit in it.

More I see is flowers—
The pictures all around the house.
It's Christmas tonight,
And won't I be dressed, though, pretty?
And happy days will come around
Through one week.

II

The moon I see—
And how pretty the trees are growing.
One man was walking along the beach—
He was lovely dressed in a beautiful, beautiful trouser-suit,
Roses on where the buttons come.
Flowers all around in one big circle—
People sat on chairs—and a bon-fire—

How pretty the moon is tonight!
And happy days I see.
Pictures all around the house—
And I am dressed the prettiest way.
My mother's got a blue and white sashed dress,
And she looks lovely.
My friends all have pink dresses with pink sashes,
And the men are all dressed
In black suits.

III

How beautiful the Lake is!
Blue lake,
And pretty sunset
Shining out,
And pretty trees all around
That are green.

IV

I am singing to thank you, Jesus Christ,
For all the lovely things you did for us,
For all the clothes and things,
And all the good fathers and mothers.

V—[*Written Oct. 15th, 1914*]

War

The war kills little children always—
Who started the war did not care.
I think if I was the man that started the war
I think that I never would have started it into such a war
To kill poor little children.

How They Burned Houses Down

They make all feel sorry,
And hope to send enough for them
To make them live again and not to die—
They want warm, they want to be hot.
They make all cry for they burn houses—
When they started I was not uncertain what they would do,
I knew they would hurt my whole heart.

Breaking Down Beautiful Churches

I never wished that they were broken
When so many men took all their time to make them beautiful.
Now they are down and will never be beautiful again.
Make them stop! They ought to be careful where they are dropping bombs.
If they drop another bomb on a beautiful place like this,
They will make me cry for years and years.

Alice Oliver Henderson

COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

AERE PERENNIUS



HE minister read the *Thanatopsis* at the memorial service in honor of Herbert Stuart Stone, whose gallantry in death on the Lusitania wrung the hearts of his friends and of all who read of it. It was Herbert Stone who, back in the nineties, first gave Chicago the lead in progressive publishing, by offering to the astonished American public beautiful editions of Bernard Shaw's plays, Richard Hovey's fine translation of Maeterlinck and Miss Hall's of Verlaine, besides many most interesting American and English poets of the day. And the young firm's little magazine, *The Chap-book*—too short-lived, alas!—was not only witty and clever beyond all its contemporaries, but it led them all in literary discernment and distinction.

The *Thanatopsis* carried me still further back—a century of American literature passed in review. When the poem first appeared, about the time of Waterloo, it was also a shock to the conservatives, for it challenged the prevalent pieties by its acceptance of nature's processes in life and death. A century of discoveries and revolutions has not killed it; even today its mood is significant and its rhythmic march has a stately beauty.

As the minister's sonorous voice rolled out the lines, I was reminded suddenly of something which happened during the last years of Bryant's long life. A lady who cherished a deep

respect for poets was talking with a member of a famous New York firm of publishers. "Oh, Bryant!" said this gentleman flippantly, "we call him 'the great national tone imparter'; his name on the title-page of a book, with a picture of his venerable head opposite, will sell anything."

"Do you mean that he sells his name as the author of books he doesn't write?" said the shocked respecter of poets.

"As author or editor—even so," said the publisher. And he mentioned *Bryant's History of the United States, Bryant's Collection of Poetry and Song,* and other good sellers, as works to which the poet had given nothing but his name.

This story always comes back to me when I make a détour from Fifth Avenue to see the beautiful rear façade of the New York Public Library. Here a throned figure of the venerable poet faces the park named in his honor, and offers us his life as a high inspiration to American youth. To whose memory was the statue erected—the poet of the *Thanatopsis* or the "great national tone-imparter?" If the former, are we not honoring too much the man who did his best work at nineteen?—and if the latter, are we not honoring too much the man who sold out?

To have done one's best work in youth is proof that one has lived downward rather than upward. Long is the roll of artists who, beginnng with more genius than character, shuffle off their glory like a rich garment and sink down in rags—or broadcloth—to a sordid feast. Indeed, so often does the world watch this spectacle that the early death of the inspired one seems the only sure consecration.

There is only one code of honor for an artist—to be true to his vision. Bryant preferred to lead a comfortable life, and be a good journalist rather than a poet, and so he descended from the serene nobility of the *Thanatopsis,* to the puerile pieties of the *Hymn to the Sea, The Future Life, The Crowded Street* and many other truly orthodox utterances. Even *The Forest Hymn,* perhaps the best of these, says merely the proper and expected thing, offering bland counsels of moderation:

> But let me often to these solitudes
> Retire, and in Thy presence reassure
> My feeble virtue. Here its enemies,
> The passions, at Thy plainer footsteps shrink
> And tremble, and are still.

If the passions were indeed the enemies of this poet's "feeble virtue," they never got the upper hand. At least they do not appear in his poetry. It is said that Mr. Bryan pronounces *To a Waterfowl* the finest American poem—a a preference which marks the limitation of his reading or taste; but this, which is no doubt Bryant's best lyric, is also marred by the ever-present and expedient moral. The famous "Truth crushed to earth" quatrain from *The Battlefield* is the only bit of his poetry, after the *Thanatopsis,* in which his religiosity rises for a moment to higher ground and assumes something of prophetic dignity.

Bryant was, in short, a man born to be a poet who sacrificed the muse, not to those violent enemies, the flesh and the devil, but to that more insidious one, the world—or, in other words, comfort and respectability. Now and then a brief

flash of inspiration disturbed his placidity, but gradually the light went out, until, in his tone-imparting old age, he could not even see that he was sitting in darkness.

Let us be careful whom we honor with monuments. Build one to Poe, who was true to his art whether drunk or sober; to Whitman, who never sold out even to pay his debts; to Whistler, whom neither wrath nor ridicule could swerve from his purpose; to any starveling who keeps faith with the muse and scorns a respectable old age: but not to the deserter, the wearer of ribbons, the tone-imparter.

H. M.

PAUL CLAUDEL

Paul Claudel is a difficult author who has written three or four books that are easy to read; and yet, although these are less arduous of approach than the rest of his work, properly to understand them, as with the other books, requires calm, leisure, and meditation. Georges Duhamel, I think, in order to write his essay in the *Mercure de France,* retired into the country, so that he might be alone with his author, and undisturbed. Jacques Rivière's two studies in *Études* bear all the marks of a lonely meditation; and after this statement at the end of the first:

> Et maintenant il faut recourir au silence, il faut tout oblier de cette analyse simplement destinée à faciliter la lecture. Voici que dans le secret l'œuvre de Claudel se reforme, se rassemble, se condense, et nous apparait soudain dans sa terrible beauté:

he finishes with a prayer, to such a point of spiritual freedom had his study brought him.

If there are two things that are super-eminent in the work of Claudel they are: imagination and religion; the imagination being of that kind which sets up innumerable bridges of metaphor between man and the sensible universe; the religion, Catholic in form, but, combined with the imagination, infinite in its extensions. If you conceive a man profoundly devoted to the Catholic Church, whose mind is like a torch moving in the metaphysic darkness of the world, whose five senses are ever alert and quick in their responses to the radiations that impinge upon them, whose memory is an infallible storehouse of rich sensation, you have some idea of a poet who is only obscure when his conceptions are greater than human expression, and who is bright with the clarity of fresh and pristine emotions, when he is rendering what you and I might also see and, perhaps, feel. Taking this passage, for instance, from *Le Cocotier,* in *Connaissance de l'Est:*

La nuit, revenant le long de la plage, battu avec une écume formidable par la masse tonitruante de ce léonin Océan Indien que la mousson du sud-ouest pousse en avant, comme je suivais cette rive jonchée de palmes pareilles à des squelettes de barques et d'animaux, je voyais à ma gauche, marchant par cette forêt vide sous un opaque plafond, comme d'énormes araignées grimper obliquement contre le ciel crépusculaire. Vénus, telle qu'une lune toute trempée de plus purs rayons, faisait un grand reflet sur les eaux. Et un cocotier, se penchant sur la mer et l'étoile, comme un être accablé d'amour, faisait le geste d'approcher son cœur du feu céleste.

Or this, again, from *Le Promeneur,* in the same book:

Aux heures vulgaires, nous nous servons des choses pour un usage, oubliant ceci de pur, qu'elles soient; mais quand, après un long travail, au travers des branches et des ronces, à Midi, pénétrant historiquement au sein de la clairière, je pose ma main sur la croupe brûlante du lourd rocher, l'entrée d'Alexandre à Jerusalem est comparable à l'énormité de ma constatation.

You see that in the first passage you have a perfect image, complete in poetic detail; but in the second you have this and something more: you have the sudden shock of a mind that has the faculty of absolute virgin experience, behind which, too, is knowledge of things worn and obliterated by use; so that, out of the torpor of the one state, and because of it, comes, because of that faculty of poetic readjustment and vision, the enormous sensation of the world seen for the first time.

The bulk of Claudel's work is dramatic in form. Four volumes of his *Théatre* have been published by the *Mercure de France,* and another by the *Nouvelle Revue Francaise,* two publishers who divide his other works as well. In addition to this dramatic work there are: *Cinq Grandes Odes suivies d'un Processional pour saluer le siècle nouveau; Deux Poèmes d'Eté,* containing *La Cantate à Trois Voix* and *Protée drame satyrique;* odes and hymns that have, so far, appeared only in reviews; translations from Poe, Chesterton and Coventry Patmore; and an *Art Poétique,* wherein Claudel treats of his conception, his representation, of life. *Connaissance de l'Est,* already mentioned, is a collection of short essays or poems in a prose of extraordinarily lucid imagery and of singular metaphorical richness, recording

Claudel's impressions of the East, where he was for many years a French consul.

This book could serve as an introduction to his work, to be followed by *L'Otage,* a drama of the French Revolution, though this is not stated; *L'Echange,* a play of which the scene is laid on the eastern shore of America; *L'Annonce faite à Marie, mystère,* which takes place in a *Moyen Age de Convention,* and which can be compared with its first version, *La Jeune Fille Violaine.* So far, no difficulty: the plays are clear, with passages of great beauty, a verbal magnificence, and a poignancy of human drama in them; in two, *L'Otage* and *L'Annonce,* such a sense of French traditions as reveals to men the principles they have been groping for: these two, the only plays immediately presentable on the stage. *L'Annonce,* indeed, was produced in Paris in December, 1912, and was received with great enthusiasm by those critics whose opinion matters eventually (and even by the others). André du Fresnois, the critic of *La Revue Critique,* a royalist organ (he has since disappeared, engulfed by the war), said of it that it "is wholly steeped in poetry, wholly animated by faith, but also wholly sustained by a just notion of the realities of the earth. It has sprung, incomparably fresh and young, from a secular tradition and from the very deeps of French Catholic consciousness. It is sublime and familiar, popular and mystical." *L'Otage* has been produced by the *Théâtre du Vieux Colombier.* It is impossible to say more here of these plays, or of *La Ville, Tête-d'Or,* and *Le Repos du Septième Jour.* These last, with the *Odes,* the *Cantate* and

the *Art Poétique,* will only be tackled by the earnest student. Much good is said of *Partage de Midi,* but it is unobtainable. *Protée,* in *Deux Poèmes d Été,* is a *délassement de poète,* and very diverting.

Claudel, in his dramas, owes much, perhaps, to Shakespeare and Æschylus; for the form of his verse he is, apparently, indebtedly to Whitman. He has himself defined this form in the words given to Cœuvre (*La Ville*):

O mon fils! lorsque j'étais un poète entre les hommes,
J'inventais ce vers qui n' avait ni rime ni mètre,
Et je le définissais dans le secret de mon cœur cette fonction double et réciproque
Par laquelle l'homme absorbe la vie, et restitue dans l'acte suprême de l'expiration
Une parole intelligible.

And again in the *Odes*:

O mon âme impatiente, pareille à l'aigle sans art? comment ferions-nous pour ajuster aucun vers? à l'aigle qui ne sait pas faire son nid même?
Que mon vers ne soit rien d'esclave! mais tel que l'aigle marin qui s'est jeté sur un grand poisson.
Et l'on ne voit rien qu'un éclatant tourbillon d'ailes et l'éclaboussement de l'écume!
Mais vous ne m'abandonnerez point, O Muses modératrices.

In the *Art Poétique,* he has also said that his art is based on

la métaphore, le mot nouveau, l'opération qui résulte de la seule existence conjointe et simultanée de deux choses différentes.

And the whole of his work is upheld by the intensity of his visual imagination constantly creating new metaphors that have the power of primitive sensations. *F. S. Flint*

REVIEWS

Visions and Revisions, by John Cowper Powys. G. Arnold Shaw, New York.

This "book of literary devotions," though by an admirer of "the grand style," is wilfully formless, detached, ragged—a kind of crazy-quilt in which bits of old brocade or rich modern gros-grain are inextricably mixed up with calico in an empirical arrangement, innocent of pattern or law. Its various essays read like stenographic reports of Mr. Powys' talks; but whereas on the lecture platform the talk is unified and harmonized by the magnetic personality of the speaker, in cold print it becomes exclamatory and falls apart for lack of style. It needs shaping and carving, planning for the whole scheme with its dues of balance, emphasis and climax.

It is a pity, because Mr. Powys shows not only intelligent appreciation of his favorite masters, but the rarer quality of imaginative sympathy. Milton, "the incarnation of the Nietzschean ideal . . . less of a Christian than any European writer since the Gospel appeared;" Shelley's "ice-cold austerity of mind—necessary if one has to detach oneself entirely from the idols of the market-place;" Whitman, who "holds open by main gigantic force that door of hope which Fate and God and Man and the Laws of Nature are all endeavoring to close;" Nietzsche, whose "spiritual contest" was the "deliberate self-inflicted crucifixion of the Christ in him, as an offering to the Apollo in him;" Shakespeare's "aching rhythms," Shakespeare of the "melancholy skepticism,

with its half-humorous assent to the traditional pieties"; in these and other instances he shows a comprehension born of love.

These papers are fragmentary studies of aspects and temperaments. They scorn to be "constructive," or exhaustive, or in any sense complete; but they are personal and sincere, and now and then they shake out rainbow lights, offer hints of glory. Our concern at present is with the nine poets among the author's nineteen literary heroes; among these he is most incisive with Shakespeare, Shelley, perhaps Whitman, and most obvious with Keats and Arnold. But the whole book is a rhapsody of praise for the "grand style," of which he says: "It announces and commands; it weeps and it pleads; it utters oracles and wrestles with angels. It never apologizes, it never rationalizes, and it never explains." *H. M.*

Earth Deities and Other Rhythmic Masques, by Bliss Carman and Mary Perry King. Kennerley.

I own to lack of interest in this kind of artificial and fanciful little out-door plays, and to a wonder whether our poets can not give a more significant and modern answer to the many out-door clubs through the country who wish to present sylvan plays in the woods. The Bohemian Club of San Francisco perhaps set the fashion during the nineties, and many other clubs have followed it, but as yet, so far as I am aware, nothing has been done which will endure beyond the day's entertainment.

Recently I was one of the judges in a competition for two prizes, of one hundred dollars and of fifty dollars, offered

for such plays by the Friends of Our Native Landscape, a Chicago out-door club. Such an offer of prizes is an urgent call to American poets, showing a real need. Yet nearly all the plays sent in were, like the masques in this book, a highly attenuated working-over of classic myths. And the prizes went, *faute de mieux,* to masques of this character, though the first-prize poet at least preserved a modern diction.

Is there no one who can put some life into this kind of thing? Can we not have a vital and beautiful response to a vital and beautiful demand? *H. M.*

King Fu Tze, a Dramatic Poem, by Paul Carus. Open Court Publishing Co., Chicago and London.

Dr. Carus, backed by the Open Court Publishing Company and its quarterly magazine, *The Monist,* now edited by Mr. Edward C. Hegeler, has for many years devoted his rare intelligence to the search for the higher truth, the contemplation of the higher spiritual life. *K'ung Fu Tze,* which is a dramatic presentation of the Confucian ideal, and such poems as *The Overgod,* in the current *Monist,* are to be regarded not as poetry so much as a metrical paraphrase of certain philosophic ideas. The high serenity of the man speaks through them, and they present a contemplative spirit's understanding of the riddle of the universe. *H. M.*

The Winnowing Fan: Poems on the Great War, by Lawrence Binyon. The New Poetry Series. Houghton Mifflin Co.

Mr. Binyon's war poetry is the work of a writer whose every instinct is for prose, and whose phrasing, when in

desperate search for a rhyme, is sometimes piteous in its agonized appeal for mercy. How is it that a man, whose studies of oriental art show a certain discrimination, can perpetrate such a quatrain as the following?—

> And there, upon the pavement stretched,
> The German wounded groan
> To see the dropping flames of death
> And feel the shells their own.

And the long *Ode for September,* while full of amiable sentiments, never lapses into poetry. In fact, only twice or thrice, in the course of the books, are we surprised by a few good lines. Perhaps the best instance is this quatrain, in *To the Belgians:*

> Still for your frontier stands
> The host that knew no dread,
> Your little stubborn land's
> Nameless, immortal dead.

H. M.

CORRESPONDENCE

TWO NOTES ON GERMAN POETRY

Editor of Poetry: The following facts concerning German art seem to demand repetition in connection with Reginald H. Wilenski's interesting articles on German poetry in two winter numbers of your magazine:

On page 178 Mr. Wilenski makes this statement: "German culture is the exclusive possession of a small class."

Of all nations Germany registers the lowest percentage of illiteracy and the amazing quantity and quality of German publications of all kinds fully confirms this fact.

A first class literary or art journal cannot flourish without adequate public support. It follows inevitably, from the beauty, number and size of German literary and artistic publications, that the class which supports them is not relatively small. From an artistic point of view our American publishing world would be a barren desert were it not for European, and particularly German, importations. Our spiritual hunger cannot feed on business, baseball or gasoline. And every serious American or English magazine that attempts to free itself for the sake of truth and beauty has a hard time of it.

Again on page 179: "German savants have absolutely no humor."

Humor is not the chief asset of a savant anywhere. Does Mr. Wilenski expect the great and venerable Ernst Haeckel to crack jokes about Darwin and evolution? For true German humor let us turn to Beethoven's eighth symphony, to the beloved Jean Paul, to Hugo Wolff's songs, to Ernst von Wolzogen, Fritz Reuter, Wilhelm Busch, or to the world-famous *Jugend, Simplississimus* and *Fiegende Blaetter.*

"Since the days of the Gothic, Germany's painting has been negligible, and the modern revival has produced singularly uninspired results."

This is truly staggering. Modern German art is notable for its universal appeal. The curious, restless, life-devouring

and life-creating mind of modern man, clothing primitive passions with undreamt-of refinements, has found in Germany masterly interpreters.

On page 180: "A poet would be inevitably influenced by this (German military) environment;" and—"Poor, ailing creatures with pale fingers and sunken cheeks."

Was Keats influenced by the Napoleonic Wars? Was Francis Thompson influenced by the London slums? Were Leconte de Lisle or Carducci influenced by Christian civilization? Were Whitman, Poe, Lanier, influenced by Yankee opinions? No! No poet, great or small, is necessarily influenced by his environment. A great poet makes his environment; he would rather die in the attempt, like John Davidson, than allow the environment to make him. No one will ever understand poets or poetry who does not understand this. Environment may furnish him material and occasions, but not the inspiration; that comes from within —always. Modern German poets, who, like Hugo von Hoffmansthal and Hauptmann, belong to that select company who really enlarge the soul's horizons, are by no means obsessed by militarism. Even Liliencron does not always sing of soldiers. Why not quote his sunny and dithyrambic *Ich war so glüchlich* or his charming *Ideal Sparziergang?*

Since Swinburne's *Songs before Sunrise* are still in the dark, we need other torch-bearers who, like Arturo Giovannitti, are able with genius to carry on the flame, and one of these is undoubtedly Richard Dehmel. Dehmel has not, as Mr. Wilenski states, "stuck to tradition." He is a

socialist poet, and fortunately he dares to say things which certain unctuous persons find "regrettable"—a word, by the way, which is almost as threadbare as the well-worn "suggestive." His *Verwandlungen der Venus* is the work of a true poet. The fact that some librarians hide it is almost evidence enough.

To characterize German poets as "ailing, pale, with sunken cheeks," is ludicrous. Otto Julius Bierbaum, Hartleben, Herman Bahr, Liliencron, etc.—those robust vikings ailing? It would make a sturdy Teuton roar with laughter. Also Liliencron undoubtedly would have resented the ecclesiastical title of high-priest. He was noted for his simple, warm humanity.

Finally, let me suggest that the dreadnoughts of England and the howitzers of Germany have nothing to do with poetry. The greatest events of to-day are merely a running accompaniment to that immortal melody which surges forever through the universe. How many critics know it when they hear it? *Ernest W. Nelson*

The following letter comes from one of the assistant professors of German in Vassar College:

Dear Editor: I have been reading the articles on German poetry in your winter numbers. Having been for a number of years a student of contemporary German poetry, I have been impressed over and over by the beauty of it, by the many new themes and forms. It seems to me that the writer of the article can not possibly have read this poetry widely,

or in any sense without prejudice. The *Kondor* is, I think, an interesting collection; its poets, some of whom I have met, are earnest in purpose, and although I dislike the crassness and café atmosphere, I find beautiful as well as interesting things in the book.

Mr. Wilenski also says that Heine is the first lyricist since Walther von der Vogelweide! Heine's was a narrow and cynical lute compared with Goethe's, surely, and I can not understand how anyone could fail to recognize Goethe's broad unmelancholy genius.

Also it may interest you to know —*à propos* of your note on universities and contemporary poetry—that at the University of Munich, for instance, one professor lectures on contemporary German poetry, and has evenings once a week, in connection with these courses, at which contemporary poets read to the students from their works. At this University another professor lectures on art since Cézanne, with slides illustrating all kinds of futurists and cubists, and he holds seminars in the secessionist and post-secessionist exhibits. It was a great inspiration to me to come in touch with these interesting activities there last summer.

Louise Kueffner

NOTES

Mr. Padraic Colum, the Irish poet who is now lecturing in this country, is the author of various tales and plays, and of *Wild Earth* and *Broad Sheet Ballads* (Norman Remington, Baltimore).

Mr. John Gould Fletcher, a young American poet, born in Arkansas, lived abroad from 1908 until last autumn, and is now sojourning in northern Michigan. In 1913 he published, through four London firms, five small books of verse, and the Houghton-Mifflin Co. have just printed his *Irradiations*, most of which first appeared in POETRY. He is represented in *Some Imagist Poets*, and he now offers our readers two rhapsodies in "polyphonic prose."

Mr. Clark Ashton Smith, a young poet of Auburn, Cal., has published *The Star Treader and Other Poems* (Robertson, San Francisco).

Frances Shaw (Mrs. Howard Shaw), of Chicago, was introduced by POETRY last year. She has not yet published a volume.

Of the poets not hitherto represented in the magazine, Mr. Hermann Hagedorn, of Fairfield, Conn., is well known as the author of *The Troop of the Guard* and *Poems and Ballads* (Macmillan).

Mr. Leyland Huckfield, born near Stratford-on-Avon in 1882, and a wage-earner at thirteen, has roughed it in Canada and Minnesota since 1906. After almost starving while ill and out of work, he got a job as a florist and is still in that business. His first book is *Legend of the Rose and Other Poems* (1911).

Mr. Max Michelson, who makes his first appearance as a poet, was born in Russia and has lived in Chicago since his childhood.

Mrs. Madeline Yale Wynne, of Deerfield, Mass., has published prose tales, but little verse. Louise Ayres Garnett (Mrs. Eugene H.), of Evanston, Ill., has published many songs with music.

Miss Rebecca Park Lawrence, of Galesburg, Ill., is a Vassar graduate of 1913.

Our "younger bards" have but little biography.

Mr. F. S. Flint's admirable reviews of French verse in *Poetry and Drama* have been sadly missed since that quarterly had to suspend because of the war. He will contribute now and then to POETRY brief articles on that subject.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Original Verse:

The Old Ships, by James Elroy Flecker. Poetry Bookshop, London.

The Contemplative Quarry, by Anna Wickham. Poetry Bookshop.

Spring Morning, by Frances Cornford. Poetry Bookshop.

Songs, by Edward Shanks. Poetry Bookshop.

The Poet in the Desert, by C. E. S. Wood. Privately printed, Portland, Ore.

K'ung Fu Tze, A Dramatic Poem, by Paul Carus. Open Court Pub. Co., Chicago.

The Unveiling, A Poetic Drama in Five Acts, by Jackson Boyd. Putnam's.

Macbeth, translated into Lithuanian by Kleofas Jurgelionis. Privately printed, Chicago.

The Masque of Marsh and River, by Howard Mumford Jones. Printed by the La Crosse State Normal School.

Essays:

The Spirit of Romance, by Ezra Pound. J. M. Dent & Sons, London.



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Chinese poetry has a wonderful humanity, like Chinese painting, and it is very free from artistic nonsense. The Chinese poet, at least in the great age of Tang, did not sit down to write poetry and lose his common sense in the process. He wrote to say something that was worth saying; and even in translation he interests us, like a man of experience talking seriously and without parade.

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Blaa-Blaa-Blaa....."The Scavenger"
Book Discussion

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Poetry

A Magazine of Verse

Edited by Harriet Monroe

AUGUST, 1915

Mountain Poems Harriet Monroe
The Water Ouzel—The Pine—A Lady of the Snows—On the Porch—Mountain Song.
Post Annos James Branch Cabell
The Apple-tree—The Monkey Nancy Campbell
The Waterfall Ellwood Colahan
The Summer Sea . . Nathan Haskell Dole
The Crag Louise M. Keuffner
Poems of Life and Death . . . Helen Hoyt
Annunciation—The New-born—Rain at Night—The Sense of Death—Action Poem.
The City Max Endicoff
On a Window Display William Rose Benét
Death and the Aviator—Inconsistency Wanda Petrunkevitch
One Listens Louise Adele Carter
Battle Wilfrid Wilson Gibson
The Going—The Joke—Nightmare—In the Ambulance—Hit—The Housewife—Hill-born—The Fear—Back.
Comments and Reviews—Our Contemporaries—Correspondence—Notes.

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Poetry
A Magazine of Verse

VOL. VI
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AUGUST, 1915

MOUNTAIN POEMS

THE WATER OUZEL

LITTLE brown surf-bather of the mountains!
Spirit of foam, lover of cataracts, shaking your wings in falling waters!
Have you no fear of the roar and rush when Nevada plunges—
Nevada, the shapely dancer, feeling her way with slim white fingers?
How dare you dash at Yosemite the mighty—
Tall white-limbed Yosemite, leaping down, down, over the cliff?
Is it not enough to lean on the blue air of mountains?
Is it not enough to rest with your mate at timber-line, in bushes that hug the rocks?
Must you èy through made waters where the heaped-up granite breaks them?

Must you batter your wings in the torrent?
Must you plunge for life or death through the foam?

THE PINE AT TIMBER-LINE

What has bent you,
Warped and twisted you,
Torn and crippled you?—
What has embittered you,
O lonely tree?

You search the rocks for a footing,
dragging scrawny roots;
You bare your thin breast to the storms,
and fling out wild arms behind you;
You throw back your witch-like head,
with wisps of hair stringing the wind.

You fight with the snows,
You rail and shriek at the tempests.
Old before your time, you challenge the cold stars.

Be still, be satisfied!
Stand straight like your brothers in the valley,
The soft green valley of summer down below.

Why front the endless winter of the peak?
Why seize the lightning in your riven hands?
Why cut the driven wind and shriek aloud?

Why tarry here?

A LADY OF THE SNOWS

The mountain hemlock droops her lacy branches
 Oh, so tenderly
 In the summer sun!
Yet she has power to baffle avalanches—
 She, rising slenderly
 Where the rivers run.

So pliant yet so powerful! Oh, see her
 Spread alluringly
 Her thin sea-green dress!
Now from white winter's thrall the sun would free her
 To bloom unenduringly
 In his glad caress.

ON THE PORCH

As I lie roofed in, screened in,
From the pattering rain,
The summer rain—
As I lie
Snug and dry,
And hear the birds complain:

Oh, billow on billow,
Oh, roar on roar,
Over me wash
The seas of war.
Over me—down—down—
Lunges and plunges
The huge gun with its one blind eye,
The armored train,
And, swooping out of the sky,
The aeroplane.
Down—down—
The army proudly swinging
Under gay flags,
The glorious dead heaped up like rags,
A church with bronze bells ringing,
A city all towers,
Gardens of lovers and flowers,
The round world swinging

In the light of the sun:
All broken, undone,
All down—under
Black surges of thunder

Oh, billow on billow
Oh, roar on roar,
Over me wash
The seas of war

As I lie roofed in, screened in,
From the pattering rain,
The summer rain—
As I lie
Snug and dry,
And hear the birds complain.

MOUNTAIN SONG

I have not where to lay my head;
Upon my breast no child shall lie;
For me no marriage feast is spread:
I walk alone under the sky.

My staff and scrip I cast away—
Light-burdened to the mountain height!

Climbing the rocky steep by day,
 Kindling my fire against the night.

The bitter hail shall flower the peak,
 The icy wind shall dry my tears.
Strong shall I be, who am but weak,
 When bright Orion spears my fears.

Under the horned moon I shall rise,
 Up swinging on the scarf of dawn.
The sun, searching with level eyes,
 Shall take my hand and lead me on.

Wide flaming pinions veil the West—
 Ah, shall I find? and shall I know?
My feet are bound upon the Quest—
 Over the Great Divide I go.

Harriet Monroe

POST ANNOS

Yolande dit, en soupirant:

"It is long since we met," she said.
I answered, "Yes."
She is not fair,
But very old now, and no gold
Gleams in that scant, gray, withered hair
Where once much gold was; and, I think,
Not easily might one bring tears
Into her eyes, which have become
Like dusty glass.
"'Tis thirty years,"
I said. "And then the war came on
Apace; and our young king had need
Of men to serve him oversea,
Against the heathen. For their greed,
Puffed up at Tunis, irks him sore."

She said, "This week my son is gone
To him at Paris with his men."
And then, "You never married, John?"

I answered, "No." And so we sate
Musing a while.
Then with his guests
Came Robert; and his thin voice broke

Upon my dream, with the old jests—
No food for laughter now; and swore
We must be friends now that our feud
Was overpast.
"We are grown old—
Eh, John?" he said. "And, by the Rood!
'Tis time we were at peace with God,
Who are not long for this world."
"Yea,"
I answered; "we are old." And then,
Remembering that April day
At Calais, and that hawthorn field
Wherein we fought long since, I said,
"We are friends now."
And she sate by,
Scarce heeding. Thus the evening sped.

And we ride homeward now, and I
Ride moodily: my palfrey jogs
Along a rock-strewn way the moon
Lights up for us; yonder the bogs
Are curdled with thin ice; the trees
Are naked; from the barren wold
The wind comes like a blade aslant
Across a world grown very old.

James Branch Cabell

THE APPLE-TREE

I saw the archangels in my apple-tree last night,
I saw them like great birds in the starlight—
Purple and burning blue, crimson and shining white.

And each to each they tossed an apple to and fro,
And once I heard their laughter gay and low;
And yet I felt no wonder that it should be so.

But when the apple came one time to Michael's lap
I heard him say: "The mysteries that enwrap
The earth and fill the heavens can be read here, mayhap."

Then Gabriel spoke: "I praise the deed, the hidden thing."
"The beauty of the blossom of the spring
I praise," cried Raphael. Uriel: "The wise leaves I sing."

And Michael: "I will praise the fruit, perfected, round,
Full of the love of God, herein being bound
His mercies gathered from the sun and rain and ground."

So sang they till a small wind through the branches stirred,
And spoke of coming dawn; and at its word
Each fled away to heaven, winged like a bird.

THE MONKEY

I saw you hunched and shivering on the stones
The bleak wind piercing to your fragile bones,
Your shabby scarlet all inadequate:
A little ape that had such human eyes
They seemed to hide behind their miseries—
Their dumb and hopeless bowing down to fate—
Some puzzled wonder. Was your monkey soul
Sickening with memories of gorgeous days,
Of tropic playfellows and forest ways,
Where, agile, you could swing from bole to bole
In an enchanted twilight with great flowers
For stars; or on a bough the long night hours
Sit out in rows, and chatter at the moon?
Shuffling you went, your tiny chilly hand
Outstretched for what you did not understand;
Your puckered mournful face begging a boon
That but enslaved you more. They who passed by
Saw nothing sorrowful; gave laugh or stare,
Unheeding that the little antic there
Played in the gutter such a tragedy.

Nancy Campbell

THE WATERFALL

O little misty waterfall,
Down from the sky-land blown,
Why do the mountains loom so tall
And why do the fir-trees moan?
O little wistful waterfall
How still is the evening grown!

Thine eyes are dim, little waterfall,
Thy voice is a faint, faint sigh.
Ah, must I follow thee, after all,
Away from the Land of the Sky?

Ellwood Colahan

THE SUMMER SEA

After the Japanese manner

Unbroken by a ripple, but yet drifting
 Onward in long wide billows, vast and free,
Upon its bosom ship and shadow lifting,
 Beneath the sunset lies the summer sea.

Nathan Haskell Dole

THE CRAG

Once I was a crag crowning the peak's sharp crest,
My red flanks bared to the golden sun,
My sharp-serried comb breaking the loose-textured low-fleeting clouds;

And once I was the sudden swift-moving shadow upon the crag,
Fallen from a white high-sailing cloud.

Once I was the cone-heavy tree upon the crag,
Tossing long needles in the wind,
Breathing sweet fragrance to the air;

And once I was the glistening spider's thread spun deftly from needle to needle.

These I was once—
Unthinking,
Untroubled by whence or whither or why;
Knowing not
Of yesterday, tomorrow, today,
Of loneliness, desire, or love, or joy:
Thus I was once.

And once I was the blue, blue sky above,
And made men glad.

Louise Mallinkrodt Kueffner

POEMS OF LIFE AND DEATH

ANNUNCIATION

Life,
The great Life,
Came unto me:
He of old ages,
The eternal,
The owner of all,
Came, and his word was for me,
Calling my name:
And the radiance of his presence shone about me.

With leaping heart I heard his voice
And the entering of his steps over my threshold:
Heard, and was not troubled;
Because it was known to me a long time
What answer I should make to Life.

With outstretched, quiet hands,
With unreluctant face,
I stood before him,
And let my eyes look into the eyes of Life:
And I gave, and delivered up to Life,
Myself:
Utterly.
Yielding me

As one yields and delivers to another
A dumb vessel.

Mighty and splendid is the presence of Life.
By a far road he comes
And travels a great way before
And sways the world.
I trembled to be near his glory,
But with unbowing head I stood before him,
With unbowing head and proud heart;
Knowing my service that I should perform to the honoring of Life.
And in his dignity I was exalted.

Now for a term I am not my own,
But Life is my master:
And I dwell under his commandment,
Beneath the fostering of his wings.
Wrapped in the mantle of Life,
Patient, by ways apart, I go;
Bearing in my flesh his sign
That I am one of his chosen:
The instrument of his purpose; the way of his will.

Slowly day follows day,
Laying its hands upon me with invisible touch,
Molding my flesh;
And I tarry waiting upon Life
Until the use he purposes for me shall be accomplished,

And his intent be fulfilled:
Until the wonder is wrought upon me that now possesses
my days.

THE NEW-BORN

I have heard them in the night—
The cry of their fear,
Because there is no light,
Because they do not hear
Familiar sounds and feel the familiar arm,
And they awake alone.
Yet they have never known
Danger or harm.
What is their dread?—
This dark about their bed?
But they are so lately come
Out of the dark womb
Where they were safely kept.
That blackness was good;
And the silence of that solitude
Wherein they slept
Was kind.
Where did they find
Knowledge of death?
Caution of darkness and cold?
These—of the little, new breath—
Have they a prudence so old?

RAIN AT NIGHT

Are you awake? Do you hear the rain?
How rushingly it strikes upon the ground,
And on the roof, and the wet window-pane!
Sometimes I think it is a comfortable sound,
Making us feel how safe and snug we are:
Closing us off in this dark, away from the dark outside.
The rest of the world seems dim tonight, mysterious and far.
Oh, there is no world left! Only darkness, darkness stretching wide
And full of the blind rain's immeasurable fall!

How nothing must we seem unto this ancient thing!
How nothing unto the earth—and we so small!
Oh, wake, wake!—do you not feel my hands cling?
One day it will be raining as it rains tonight; the same wind blowing;
Raining and blowing on this house wherein we lie: but you and I—
We shall not hear, we shall not ever know.
O love, I had forgot that we must die.

SINCE I HAVE FELT THE SENSE OF DEATH

Since I have felt the sense of death,
Since I have borne its dread, its fear—

Oh, how my life has grown more dear
Since I have felt the sense of death!
Sorrows are good, and cares are small,
Since I have known the loss of all.

Since I have felt the sense of death,
And death forever at my side—
Oh, how the world has opened wide
Since I have felt the sense of death!
My hours are jewels that I spend,
For I have seen the hours end.

Since I have felt the sense of death,
Since I have looked on that black night—
My inmost brain is fierce with light
Since I have felt the sense of death.
O dark, that made my eyes to see!
O death, that gave my life to me!

ACTION POEM

A Song to Wake Your Dear in the Morning

I kiss the locks of your hair:
Do you feel me there,
Sleepy one?

I will put a kiss on your brow:
Are you waking now?
Won't you wake, sleepy one?

A kiss on your left eye; on your right—
Closed tight, closed tight!
Oh, you are a hard one to wake!

A kiss on your nose
Where your deep breath goes,
Sleepy one!

Now a kiss for each ear:
Do you hear, do you hear?
Wake, sleepy one!

A kiss for this cheek; a kiss for this:
How many kisses you will miss!
Won't you wake? Won't you wake?

Now I come to your lips that I love:
Oh, you are waking! You wake and move!
Sleepy one!

Sleepy one,
My kisses are done.
Oh, you are a hard one to wake!

Helen Hoyt

THE CITY

Haunted
By furtive fear of Heaven's wrath
For wallowing in the mire,
Each day,
With a coward's mockery of courage,
The city hurls a monumental oath
Of brick and mortar
Far up into the air.

These are the sky-tipped towers
Of terrifying height
Rising from the swamp-black wilderness of greed—
A frothy challenge to the gods
From snarling lips.

Max Endicoff

ON A WINDOW DISPLAY IN A WESTERN CITY

He changed the card, and pointed, and he twirled himself
around
To show the sack suit's jaunty cut, "a twenty-dollar treat."
Behind the wide show-window's glass he ogled, strutted,
frowned,
Disposed his collar, shot his cuffs, and twinkled, head to
feet.
I stood amid the gaping crowd and watched him from the
street.

That vest-adjusting marionette, that little lacquered slave
In serge and tweed without a crease, disported, deft and
droll,
To coax our custom. Left and right he postured, pert or
grave.
He arched his chest; he tried to smoothe—what creases from
his soul?
I wondered if his underwear was one great thread-webbed
hole!

A subtle pathos reached from him, for all his flashy strut,
We all would fain usurp the stage. 'Twas his heroic dream,
But warped by shrewd necessity; a climbing from the rut,
Like some bedraggled butterfly that crawls from grime to
gleam,
However evanescent, where the public dump-heaps steam.

Tin cans and broken bottles often flash a diamond ray!
A little sun will dry the mire on wings that missed their mark!
I wondered whither went his bright-shod feet at end of day.
Did drink or drugs devour his soul? Perhaps in mornings dark
He crawled to some damp bench and stretched 'neath papers in the park.

Such thoughts contribute saving grace. Believe them? Lord, I must!
If voluntary choice were—this!—it turns the stomach, quite,—
Where once these streets were open range, horned cattle stamped the dust,
And, bronzed and brown, unknown to town's insane electric light,
Beneath the deep blue, star-pricked skies men rode the herd by night!

William Rose Benét

DEATH AND THE AVIATOR

Joyously he dips and flies,
Floats at ease in the windy skies
Where the changing cloud hosts run;
Fragile winged between earth and sun,
Strong in youth and seeming free:
And he rides, O Death, with thee!

Piteous and a broken thing,
Solemn, slow, the mourners bring.
Crushed the torch and quenched the fire
Of his prophet's keen desire;
Where—oh, where the living flame?—
Spirit thou alone could'st tame?

INCONSISTENCY

Proud man, compact of fire and clod,
Doth logic lack, indeed;
Creates strong, swift and free, his god—
Then binds him with a creed.

Wanda Petrunkevitch

ONE LISTENS

I heard Death singing.
 Lone was the darkening way;
The song was a glad song, ringing
 Far, faint and gay;
But pale poppies were clinging
 To the feet that went that way.

Gay, faint bugles of Death
 Airily blowing;
Poppies of strange, cold breath
 Frailly growing;
And around and above and beneath
 A faint wind blowing.

A weak wind wearily blowing,
 Like a blown winding-sheet,
That wrapped me in its dread flowing
 From face to feet;
A wind that seemed as if blowing
 Between the earth and my feet.

Far—farther than wonder
 Could follow, or dreams,
The sunken sun lay under
 The furthest streams;

Far beyond longing or wonder,
 Or dreams.

Death's song like a nightingale's cry
 Through that lone dark,
Pierced it, wildly and high;
 And my heart said, Hark!—
'Tis the nightingale's cry!
 Nay, said my soul, the lark!

But poppies impeded my treading;
 Sleep and great fear fell upon me—
What dews of what cold shedding
 Were these shed upon me?
Behind me no way for treading,
 No way beyond me.

And gay, faint bugles of Death
 Airily blowing;
Poppies of strange cold breath
 Frailly growing;
And around and above and beneath
 A faint wind blowing.

Louise Adèle Carter

BATTLE

THE GOING

He's gone.
I do not understand.
I only know
That as he turned to go
And waved his hand,
In his young eyes a sudden glory shone:
And I was dazzled by a sunset glow,
And he was gone.

THE JOKE

He'd even have his joke
While we were sitting tight,
And so he needs must poke
His silly head in sight
To whisper some new jest
Chortling. But as he spoke
A rifle cracked . . .
And now God knows when I shall hear the rest!

NIGHTMARE

They gave him a shilling,
They gave him a gun;
And so he's gone killing
The Germans, my son.

I dream of that shilling—
I dream of that gun:
And it's they that are killing
The boy who's my son.

IN THE AMBULANCE

"Two rows of cabbages,
Two of curly-greens,
Two rows of early peas,
Two of kidney-beans."

That's what he is muttering,
Making such a song,
Keeping other chaps awake,
The whole night long.

Both his legs are shot away,
And his head is light;

So he keeps on muttering
All the blessed night:

"Two rows of cabbages,
Two of curly-greens,
Two rows of early peas,
Two of kidney-beans."

HIT

Out of the sparkling sea
I drew my tingling body clear, and lay
On a low ledge the livelong summer day,
Basking, and watching lazily
White sails in Falmouth Bay.

My body seemed to burn
Salt in the sun that drenched it through and through,
Till every particle glowed clean and new
And slowly seemed to turn
To lucent amber in a world of blue . . .

I felt a sudden wrench—
A trickle of warm blood—
And found that I was sprawling in the mud
Among the dead men in the trench.

THE HOUSEWIFE

She must go back, she said,
Because she'd not had time to make the bed.
We'd hurried her away
So roughly . . . and, for all that we could say,
She broke from us, and passed
Into the night, shells falling thick and fast.

HILL-BORN

I sometimes wonder if it's really true
I ever knew
Another life
Than this unending strife
With unseen enemies in lowland mud;
And wonder if my blood
Thrilled ever to the tune
Of clean winds blowing through an April noon
Mile after sunny mile
On the green ridges of the Windy Gile.

THE FEAR

I do not fear to die
'Neath the open sky,

To meet death in the fight
Face to face, upright.

But when at last we creep
Into a hole to sleep,
I tremble, cold with dread,
Lest I wake up dead.

BACK

They ask me where I've been,
And what I've done and seen.
But what can I reply
Who know it wasn't I,
But someone just like me,
Who went across the sea
And with my head and hands
Slew men in foreign lands . . .
Though I must bear the blame
Because he bore my name.

Wilfrid Wilson Gibson

COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

IN CATHAY



HO shall outwit death but he who builds, who sings, but he who creates beauty too beautiful to die?

It is morning in Peking. The Forbidden City lifts its yellow roofs to the sun, roofs that curve to their tips like a slim new moon and perch brave files of mocking animals. It is the third reign from the great founder of the dynasty—that conqueror of the world who destroyed his enemies and levelled their monuments, and who lies entombed in the Southern Hills, guarded by stone beasts and counsellors who hush the desert. Now have his son, and his son's son, magnificently reigning, commanded the builder, the carver, the painter, to erect and adorn new monuments more haughty than the old; and the poet to chant their glory in high words, to the sound of flutes and fountains.

Today a long procession winds over the bridge—the high-curving moon-marble bridge whose balustrade is curled into sea-foam and coiled into dragons. Below pink lotus flowers push out of the shining water, and beyond a slender tiled pagoda blooms in purple and turquoise out of the green. Little laughing boys pass by, bearing high poles with long pointed streamers that gild the wind. Men follow with banners—oh, hundreds!—silken banners that lift to the sun,

in patterned embroideries of many colors, the glory of him—the Emperor—and his ancestors. Banners round and square, banners blue and crimson, white cylindrical banners whose story never ends: borne by ivory-colored, slant-eyed men in silken coats aflare like rainbows.

And who are these bringing gifts? In the hand of one is a bowl glazed with the blue of forgotten seas: another holds high a long-necked silver swan, tall in its pride. In the carved box of another is rolled a landscape painted, in powder of malachite and lapis lazuli, with the dreams of ten thousand years. Another brings a vase in the four colors, pictured with ladies of an ancient reign, court ladies in trellised gardens, with kingfisher-feather jewels in their hair and rich robes enwinding their slow little feet. And others bear precious charms carved in turquoise and amethyst and emerald, or little ivory sages in lacquered boxes, or finely tapestried silken panels woven into fables of the phoenix bird. And one lifts high a wonder-work of moon-white jade, wrought day after day, life after life, into an image of Lord Buddha throned on the lotus, Lord Buddha with jasper eyes fixed in rapture, his right hand extending two fingers to bless the world.

But where are they going, these gift-bearers, attended by eunuchs in gorgeous coats, each worth a mandarin's tribute; by palace guards mailed and sworded and terrible; by musicians ringing bells and beating drums, by hordes of retainers more gorgeous than poppies in the sun? And followed—yes

—by princes and viceroys from far provinces, each with his strange and splendid retinue?

They turn from the bridge into the lacquered walk, whose pillared roof, tiled without and painted within, answers with many colors the challenge of the sun. Slowly they file between the crimson columns, and draw near the bright roofs of the sacred dwelling, to prostrate themselves before the Dragon Throne, and lay their gifts in heaps beneath it. For is it not the birthday of the Son of Heaven—of him, the mighty and glorious, brother of the sun and sister of the moon, who shall possess the earth ten thousand years!

The gilded banners salute the sacred roofs of six colors, the roofs yellow and green, turquoise and heliotrope, blue-green and sapphire softly shining, with the little guardian animals ever peeking and prinking at the corners. They begin to ascend the low white steps to the Hall of Audiences, while the long procession lies winding like a serpent back through the walk, over the bridge, into the wood and beyond.

Why do they halt and delay—a moment, a prayer's length, hour after hour? Why do the long lines pause motionless, their rich robes and trappings a-sparkle in the sun? Why does the Son of Heaven linger alone in the anteroom, contemplative, absorbed, ecstatic?—the Son of Heaven, radiant with youth and power, his yellow *k'o-sse* robe woven with the twelve symbols of power, his brow adorned with the magic emerald carved long ago by his divine ancestors in heaven? Why does he not rise, and go forth to his dragon-carved throne, and take proud possession of his state—

while the long files approach and fall prostrate before him, and heap their gifts at his feet?

The Son of Heaven sits motionless in his yellow robe with its twelve symbols of power, his brow lit green by the magic emerald. Hour after hour he sits cross-legged, contemplative, while the long procession waits in the sun.

For the Son of Heaven is making a poem—a little poem in five lines which shall give sound and shape to the world.

H. M.

REVIEWS

The Man on the Hill-Top, by Arthur Davison Ficke. Kennerley.

Blank verse—unrhymed iambic pentameter—has been recognized as an expressive medium of intimate spiritual biography ever since the voice of Marlowe's Faustus said to the dream-woman of his desire:

> Oh, thou art fairer than the evening air,
> Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars.

The dullness of most contemporary blank verse seems to be imparted by the author's total failure to handle the extremely varied accent, and conversational intervals, of the line, with any vital understanding of its sovereign power in speaking the movement of meditation, the pacing step of absorbed revery, as it slowly turns a corner down the mysterious cloisters of the soul.

One recalls with pleasure the running parody, in Sheridan's *Critic,* of blank verse as a mere grandiose record of outer event:

> [*Enter Governor with his hair properly disordered.*]
> A hemisphere of evil planets reigns,
> And every planet sheds contagious fury!
> My Spanish prisoner is ta'en. My daughter,
> Meeting the dead corse borne along, is gone
> Distract.

Though *The Man on the Hilltop* is written in unrhymed iambic pentameter, and by a contemporary poet, its first excellence is that it does express spiritual biography. It is the story of a man who has known as a child the injustice in the world. In this case, it is in the workaday world of mills and of courts that he has felt the insolence of office, and the spurns that patient merit from the unworthy takes.

> These things—
> Seen by a child who with his mother stood,
> Three younger ones beside him, and looked out
> Into the endless and appalling void
> Of destitution—could not be forgot,
> But needs must bend the corner of the mouth,
> And sink the eyes to sparks in their deep caves.

He leaves the life of the forge, as he grows to be a man, and becomes a shepherd in the West. Here, though no longer struggling with poverty, he broods upon the history of his dead, of his scattered family, of the laborers of the earth, broods until his mind wreaks upon itself a doom which only the poet should reveal to his readers. The poem is a true tragedy told in fitting music, simple and sincere.

It must be confessed that on gathering from a glance ahead that the next poem was about "Theodorus, a noble monk of Athens," "the old Abbot" and a "gray-walled monastery," the reviewer began to suspect that here she might find a text chiefly woven of the same material as "My Spanish prisoner is ta' en."

It is true that *At Saint Stephanos* is marred by a few cannery phrases and lines:

> My approaching step
> Echoed upon the drawbridge whose frail span—

Nevertheless, the general musical style of the poem has the interesting characteristic the first poem indicated, of evoking a mind's biography.

At Saint Stephanos speaks—in the voice of Theodorus, the lover of beauty, the devotee of poets—with the tongue of a peculiar sympathy, not only for those who have longed to realize poetry in their own lives, but for the music-makers themselves, the dreamers of dreams, the builders and makers of the world forever.

Sympathy for the poetry of the world is indeed well spoken in tones of varying lightness and depth throughout the volume. As in *The Gentle Reader:*

> Why does the poet chose to sing?
> No impulse ever stirred in me
> The wish to make myself a thing
> To which all mocking jibes might cling.
> *Perhaps he sees more than you see.*
>
> Why should this fool go crying out
> The secrets of his soul? In steel
> I case myself; nor care to shout

The things one does not talk about.
Perhaps he feels more than you feel.

If I had wisdom to impart,
I'd say the thing, and let it go;
Not trifle with a foolish art,
And make a motley of my heart!
Perhaps he knows more than you know.

These lines begin the third part of the book entitled, for reasons not very comprehensible, *Grotesques:* perhaps because it is the unfortunate custom of our country to introduce with a deprecatory gesture all verse not literal as well as all verse not solemn. ("Now I am going to be humorous—I know it is very queer in me.") I say unforunate, because I believe the custom arises from the sad need of deferring to a wretched, morbid, not to say snobbish, wish on the part of hordes of American readers to like verse not because of its humor, music, wit, truth, keenness, ardor, generosity, nor for any other positive and attractive intrinsic quality on earth, but simply for its "importance."

We love pretentiousness. We are too self-important, and too pre-occupied with our own position as admirers of the largest assumptions in poetry, to perceive that there is more fire from the blue urn of day poured into the harmonious ironies of Heine, or Theophile Gautier's melodic grace in presenting the aloe tree, or Bunner's pitcher of mignonette on the tenement's highest casement, than in all the swelling periods of Stephen Phillips' *Paolo and Francesca;* and that the freshness of these more quiet and directly realized creations will be fragrant to the readers' perception long after

this "important poem" has gone where Byron's *Doge of Venice* and Bailey's *Festus* are.

To the present reviewer, the most vital poems in Mr. Ficke's book are those not featured by an initial position, nor noticed in the title or announcements. Excellent as the two first poems are, they have rather the character of interesting achievement than of "the truth thy mother bore thee, born to utter."

Of a more vivid musical presence are several shorter poems—most of them familiar to the readers of POETRY: three brief love-poems—*The Three Sisters, To a Child,* and *Fathers and Sons;* also *The Gentle Reader* and *A Cricket* among the *Grotesques.* First of all in its presentation of a striking individual endowment of the author's, is the Swinburne elegy. This poem does indeed say "the truth thy mother bore thee, born to utter." In its expression of sympathy for the poetry of the world, it has the flying scope, the forthright and singing candor, of a unique power.

Sympathy for the poetry of the world—the charm pours through the elegy's imaginative admiration with a movement whose distinction none but those deaf to the speaking notes, the interval and echo of a musical page, can fail to hear.

We, the readers of America, especially need a sympathy for the poetry of the world. We especially need the tonic ability to take a long leap into the whole-hearted expression of truth, to plunge

> soul-forward, head-long in a book,
> Impassioned for its beauty and salt of truth.

The Swinburne elegy is of peculiar value to us, belittled as we are by the ugliest fault of democracy—its disparagement of distinction, its dislike of unusual gifts, of large forces other than the large forces which are known to us all as the sharers of a mysterious mortal destiny. This jealousy of genius is democracy's meanest error. We may see it not only, nor even chiefly, in the thread-bare instances of the public neglect of Whitman and Poe. What is more serious is the narrow jealousy of genius which has led so many able American writers to pride themselves on their ignorance of all methods of expression other than their own. One wearies of all these clique methodisms and pharisaisms in our country.

> I am master of this college;
> What I don't know isn't knowledge—

This is too often the attitude of our contemporary poets to poetry grown outside the island of their own manner. In Mr. Ficke's work we find another spirit. From this point of view poetry and criticism may both be congratulated on receiving a distinguished contribution in his gift of creative force in admiration. *Edith Wyatt*

CHAP BOOKS AND BROADSHEETS

The Old Ships, by James Elroy Flecker. *Spring Morning,* by Frances Cornford. *The Contemplative Quarry,* by Anna Wickham. *Songs,* by Edward Shanks. The Poetry Bookshop London. *A Broadside,* produced by Jack B. Yeats. The Cuala Press, Dundrum, Dublin.

Verse by new poets should always come to us in the way that Mr. Harold Monro and those associated with him choose to send it out from the Poetry Bookshop—in books small in bulk and small in price (a shilling or sixpence), and with a format that barely shows the machinery of production. This way is the right way: young writers eager about poetry, with some praiseworthy verse accomplished, should not be compelled to wait until they have bulk enough for stiff covers and firm binding. The three writers who have still their names to make have been given the advantage of appearing in an unpretentious and attractive way.

James Elroy Flecker is not one of the poets for whom unpretentious covers are demanded. *The Bridge of Fire, Forty-two Poems, The Golden Journey to Samarkand,* contained some of the best poetry written by the younger English poets. His fame was secure when he died—alas!—in January at the age of thirty. His *Ballad of Iskander* was an astonishing poem for a man in the twenties to have written. It printed itself on my mind when I read it five years ago. With his definiteness, with his sure accomplishment, Flecker was very much a French poet—a Parnassian. The movement towards free rhythms did not affect him at all. If one wanted to show that to create a sense of unloosed life, it is not necessary to break up poetic forms—nay, that it is wiser to use the most restrained forms—one might give his translation of Albert Samain's poem about the dancing girl:

> The revel pauses and the room is still:
> The silver flute invites her with a trill,

> And, buried in her great veils fold on fold,
> Rises to dance Pannyra, Heel of Gold.
> Her light steps cross; her subtle arm impels
> The clinging drapery; it bursts and swells,
> Hollows and floats, and bursts into a whirl:
> She is a flower, a moth, a flaming girl.
> All lips are silent; eyes are all in trance:
> She slowly wakes the madness of the dance,
> Windly and wild the golden torches burn,
> She turns, and swifter yet she tries to turn,
> Then stops: A sudden marble stiff she stands.
> The veil that round her coiled its spiral bands,
> Checked in its course, brings all its folds to rest,
> And, clinging to bright limb and pointed breast,
> Shows, as beneath silk waters woven fine,
> Pannyra naked in a flash divine!

Many of his contemporaries would have been induced to express this abandonment by metrical irregularity.

These last poems are worthy of the fine and brave poet that James Elroy Flecker was. His poem on the war, *Burial in England,* is splendid in its lift above vulgar appeal:

> Our foes—the hardest men a state can forge,
> An army wrenched and hammered like a blade
> Toledo wrought neither to break nor bend,
> Dipped in that ice, the pedantry of power,
> And toughened with wry gospels of dismay:
> Such are these who brake down the door of France,
> Wolves worrying at the old World's honor,
> Hunting Peace not to prison but her tomb.

It is a foe's but a generous foe's judgment. His appeal to his own countrymen is generous, too:

> But young men, you who loiter in the town,
> Need you be roused with overshouted words—
> Country, Empire, Honor, Liège, Louvain?
> Pay your own youth the duty of her dreams!

And it is good to know that this poet, dying at thirty in the miserable days of war, was able to write:

> Broader than Earth
> Love stands eclipsing nations with his wings,
> While Pain, his shadow, delves as black and deep
> As he e'er flamed or flew.

Frances Cornford's verse has been known in Cambridge (England) circles these few years. The poems in *Spring Morning* are really songs of innocence—simple, happy, unintentional verses about a dog, a walk, a child's dream, a wasted day, about dawn, morning and evening. The woodcuts in the booklet are quaint and old-fashioned, and quite in the spirit of these childishly-serious poems. This is a sheaf of verses that will make a pleasant accompaniment for one's daily thoughts.

The Contemplative Quarry is in the opposite spirit. Here is woman claiming experiences for herself, songs for herself. The intention of the writer has put her emotions awry, and her songs are hard and twisted. The quarry is woman; the object of her continuous contemplation is man, the pursuer. The booklet is provocative, and it has a suggestion that the writer will rise out of a world that causes her a little amusement and much exasperation.

> If I had peace to sit and sing,
> Then I could make a lovely thing;
> But I am stung with goads and whips,
> So I build songs like iron ships.
> Let it be something for my song,
> If it is sometimes swift and strong.

Miss Wickham's verses might be answers to belated advances in *Songs* by Edward Shanks. Mr. Shanks does not know he is belated, and he writes with assurance of meadows, and maids that may be clipped and kissed therein. His songs show good accomplishment, although they are all kept on the youthful-erotical plane. He has listened eagerly to the old English songs and ballads, and he has the wood-pigeon notes they have when they speak of a love that is not tragical. But why should he have re-written *The Maid's Wager?* These songs are eager and have a feeling for meadows and sunlight and summer days.

New verse is sometimes printed in *The Broadside* that Jack B. Yeats produces monthly, but he gives more often specimens of the old anonymous songs that are still sung on the roads and in the streets in Ireland. His *Broadside* is a two-leaved pamphlet, hand-printed with three pictures, one of them colored. It is the pictures by Jack B. Yeats that make it valuable. The ballad-singers, tinkers, pugilists, circus people and obscure adventurers of all kinds that he has given us form a gallery of vital and original types. The present *Broadside* has one of the Irish "secret" songs about Napoleon, with a ballad by a modern Irish writer. The illustrations—gaunt Irish houses, spirited horses, eager youths and imaginative-looking peasants—belong in every line to a fine and personal art. *Padraic Colum*

Poems, by E. Scotton Huelin. *Sounds From Another Valley,* by H. F. Sampson. *The Song of the Five,* by Cecil Garth. Elkin Mathews.

I have before me three books. They are what the reviewers call "little books," meaning anything which does not cost five shillings. In this case they are all "good," and none is distinguished. True, none of them treats of the war, but on the other hand none of them is as interesting as Edgar Master's last book, none has the tang of J. S. Eliot's newest work, or of that of Orrick Johns at his best.

In no case do I wish to offer the young (?) writers advice. The reviewer does, as a matter of course, usually start to offer advice. If you see a man like Johns, who hits the bulls-eye about one time in six, but hits it, you of necessity want to offer advice. If a new, presumably youngish, poet convinces you of his personality, his impulse, and constantly mars his effects by flaws of surface, by *gaucherie,* there is a certain kind of purely technical advice which can be offered by someone longer in the lists, and which may even be accepted and do no harm, or very little harm, or even some good. The gist of it is to make the young writer more constantly aware, more vividly aware, of his medium. I think such advice can scarcely ever be given to advantage save by someone who believes in or admires the work which he is striving to correct or guide forward.

That aside, I have before me three books, each in a different fashion:

Mr. E. Scotton Huelin is up to date; he might have been reading Tagore and the imagists. He writes mostly *vers libre.*

Mr. H. F. Sampson might have been reading Swinburne and the nineties.

Mr. Cecil Garth might have been reading Browning.

All of these men are poetic, they all have a right to sing. Mr. Huelin is pictorial and somewhat pale in emotion; he will drag in his "little self of yesterday." I suppose he is the new poet of the season, *the* new poet of the season. And Mr. Sampson is vigorous. And Mr. Garth—oh, well, I like Mr. Garth, but I can't admit that he has yet learned to write.

And I sit here in the sun feeling that I am doing these poets an injury in not "getting up an enthusiasm." They are, I believe, the pick of the season. I am in each case convinced of the sincerity, of the poetic nature, of the writer, and there, I suppose, is an end of it. You *can't* call them writers of promise; they simply *don't* promise. In the case of Eliot, of Johns, one can take a reasonable chance on the future. *E. P.*

OUR CONTEMPORARIES

OUR FRIEND THE ENEMY

The Dial, according to precedent, casts the obloquy of its disapproval upon the rare and unusual book that has in it the springs of life. This time it is Mr. Masters' *Spoon River Anthology.* Mr. Raymond M. Alden objects to its deliberate unloveliness; Spoon River, he thinks, must be a place peculiarly accursed, since it furnishes such an extraordinary study in mortuary statistics! As a proof of this, he recounts the "cruel and unusual" means by which the people in the first half of the *Anthology* met their death. Well, not all people come to a natural death, whatever that may mean. Perhaps if Mr. Alden would stop to count up, he might be as appalled as I was, on making this test, to realize how many friends and acquaintances have not died the peaceful death of old age.

But the spell of romanticism is still as potent upon death as upon life. We may measure the critic not only by what he condemns, but by what he praises. Mr. Alden turns from Mr. Masters' "deliberate unloveliness" to the wordy artifice with which Mr. Thomas Hardy glosses the sinking of the Titanic.

> And as the smart ship grew
> In stature, grace, and hue,
> In shadowy silence grew the Iceberg too.
>
> Alien they seem to be:
> No mortal eye could see
> The intimate welding of their later history.

Or sign that they were bent
By paths coincident
On being anon twin halves of one august event.

Till the Spinner of the Years
Said "Now!" And each one hears
And consummation comes, and jars two hemispheres.

With all Mr. Hardy's poems to chose from (many of them, by the way, very much akin to Mr. Masters' poems in spirit, the bitterly ironic spirit which expresses, while it masks, a passionate idealism) this selection is certainly enough to "jar two hemispheres!"

Much might be said of this type of criticism, but what is the use? People will continue to read it under the conviction that only the dull is sound, and that only those critics who uphold the old at the expense of the new (although half their effort is given to proving that the new is very old), are the real conservators of human progress.

Naturally the Imagists come in for their share of condemnation. Mr. Alden says:

> Even if we have serious suspicions as to the probable value of these experiments, we should try to understand them; and for this reason it is a cause for satisfaction that there should be initiated a *New Poetry Series*, designed to represent the work of the latest generation in small, well-printed volumes, modestly priced.

Here we have the customary pat for the publishers, whose work is so much more important than that of the poets they print. Mr. Alden does not follow his own advice, he does not really try to understand the work of the Imagists. And

for the better understanding of the public, he presents what he considers to be the blemishes.

Is Mr. Alden's criticism of a type to guide or instruct in any way the professional craft of poets? I do not think so. Its tendency is simply to discourage the public. No art gallery—and an art gallery serves the best function of criticism—strives to collect only the worst examples of a painter's art.

The Dial is one of the few journals in America devoted exclusively to the interests of literature. It is a sad commentary on the present state of criticism that it should be recorded of *The Dial,* as by Mr. Owen Wister in *The Atlantic,* that it recognizes merit only *after the fact.* For the initial recognition, genius must look to other tribunals.

A. C. H.

WHITMAN AMENDED

We are indebted to the New York *Call* for the following editorial:

DOWN WITH FREEDOM!

Being an attempt to aid F. P. A., Don Marquis, Berton Braley, the Poetry Society of America, and others too humorous to mention, in their favorite pastime, "Suppressing Free Verse."

How can we best help the good cause?

We shall not—as in their custom—prove the infinite superiority of the regular forms by turning *To Be or Not to be* or *I didn't Raise my Boy to be a Soldier* into *vers libre,* polyrhythmics, or any other Whitmaniacal curosity. There is a better way. By rewriting Whitman, Oppenheim and the rest as poetry, a clear case will be made against these "modern" irrationalities.

For instance—Whitman, in a misguided moment, rough-hews this fragment:

Smile, O voluptuous cool-breath'd earth!
Earth of the slumbering and liquid trees!
Earth of shine and dark mottling the tide of the river!
Far-sweeping elbow'd earth—rich apple-blossom'd earth!
Smile, for your lover comes.

On being turned into poetry this would appear:

Lusty, cool-breath'd earth, keep smiling,
With your sleeping, liquid trees,
With your shine and dark beguiling
Rivers, yes, and trees;
Down the elbowed heavens piling
Gay with apples and with plums
All a-blossom—keep a-smiling,
For your lover comes.

That's the stuff, eh? Real poetry! "The singing line," "the lyric lilt," and all that.

Here's another prosy series of jottings by Whitman:

I believe a leaf of grass is no less than the journey-work of the stars,
And the running blackberry would adorn the parlors of heaven,
And a cow crunching with depressed head surpasses any statute,
And a mouse is miracle enough to stagger sextillions of infidels.

Longfellow or Cale Young Rice would have plucked from the lyre some such dulcet strains as these:

To me each leaf of grass that grows
Is mighty as a ranging star;
Each running blackberry that blows
Would shine in heaven halls afar;
The browsing cow within the vale
A statute easily excels—
While any mouse the cheeks would pale
Of sixty trillion infidels!

That ought to convince all doubters!

CORRESPONDENCE

TWO POEMS BY RILKE

Dear Editor: In the article on *Modern German Poetry*, by Mr. Reginald H. Wilensky, in the February number of POETRY, the author gave considerable space to the profound and delicate Austrian poet, Rainer Maria Rilke. Among the examples of Rilke's poetry quoted was *Die Erblindende*, which I had never seen before and was immediately tempted to translate into English. Believing that it may possibly interest the readers of POETRY, I am sending you this translation, together with one of another poem by Rilke, *Menschen bei Nacht*. *Margarete Münsterberg*

GROWING BLIND

She sat, like all the rest of us, at tea.
It seemed at first as if she raised her cup
Not quite as all the others held theirs up.
She smiled: her smile was pitiful to see.

And when we rose at last with talk and laughter,
And through the many rooms with idle pace,
As chance would have it, strolled from place to place—
Then I saw her. She slowly followed after.

Restrained, like one who must be calm and cool
Because she soon will sing before a crowd;
Upon her happy eyes, without a cloud,
The light fell from outside, as on a pool.

She followed slowly, hesitating, shy,
As if some height or bridge must still be passed,
And yet—as if, when that was done, at last
She would no longer walk her way, but fly.

PEOPLE AT NIGHT

Nights were not made for the crowds, and they sever
You from your neighbor, so you shall never
Seek him, defiantly, at night.
But if you make your dark house light,
To look on strangers in your room,
You must reflect—on whom.

False lights that on men's faces play
Distort them gruesomely.
You look upon a disarray,
A world that seems to reel and sway,
A waving, glittering sea.
On their foreheads gleams a yellow shine
Where thoughts are chased away.
Their glances flicker mad from wine,
And to the words they say
Strange heavy gestures make reply,
That struggle in the buzzing room;
And they say always, "I" and "I";
And mean—they know not whom.

POETRY AND THE PANAMA-PACIFIC EXPOSITION

Dear POETRY: Do you remember how, when the pinch of war began to be felt in Europe, letters poured in upon you from the poets there? They contained one cry: "Protect the arts! To you in America falls the task of keeping the flame alight, for we are ruined."

The Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco had an unusually favorable chance to respond to the cry of the artists of stricken Europe. But whatever it may have done for the other arts, it has done practically nothing for the poets. Aside from the fact that Mr. Markham is to write an "offi-

cial poem," there is no recognition whatever of the fact that poetry exists. It is true that as an architectural decoration of the archways certain quotations from Confucius and Walt Whitman are used, and to these the directors point triumphantly. It is significant in this connection that no commercial exhibit is accepted which was in existence at the time of the St. Louis exposition.

Is it not time that poetry should stand squarely on her rights as a living art with a living message, and demand recognition alongside of painting and sculpture? Doubtless practical difficulties would present themselves in the matter of the choice of a jury and the method of setting before the public the poems selected. But these difficulties would be no greater than in the case of painting. And to the many distinguished visitors to the Exposition, not only from Europe but also from the newly awakened Orient, which is gravely examining our western culture, the lack of any recognition of one of the oldest and most reverenced of the arts cannot but seem significant. It will be difficult to explain to them that the official oblivion on the subject comes not from the lack of excellent material to be exhibited, but from lack of appreciation on the part of a local board of directors. The Panama-Pacific Exposition has lost an excellent chance. It remains for some future Exposition, perhaps the one contemplated in Japan, to be the first to house the lyric muse.

Eunice Tietjens

Mrs. Tietjens' very reasonable suggestion is being discussed with some asperity along "the Coast," where the paragraphers have had their usual profoundly humorous time with it. Mr. Samuel Travers Clover recently answered some of their objections in his Los Angeles weekly, *The Graphic,* of which Mrs. Tietjens, since her much regretted departure from the POETRY office, has become poetry editor. We quote a part of his editorial:

> Mrs. Tietjens' argument that poetry is a "fine art," and in its present renascence a distinct feature of the cultural progress of our country, ergo, worthy of representation at a national exposition, strikes us as a sound postulate. Surely, she contends, largely considered, poetry is of as much ultimate value as poultry, which occupies more than an acre of space. As to the manner of exhibiting verse her suggestion is that a jury of contemporary poets, reinforced by a professor of literature from one of the universities, and, perhaps, an editor, would be fully as competent to judge the volumes submitted as are contemporary painters to judge the canvases. The volumes accepted could be ranged in book-shelves in a quiet room, where the public could browse at will. "Then," she adds, "since the music of the spoken word is half the magic, periodical readings could be given, either by visiting poets or by someone competent to read their works."
>
> There is nothing bizarre or impractical in her suggestion, we submit. The plan of inviting our modern poets to a congress offers great attraction. With Percy Mackaye, Vachel Lindsay, the "Gospel of Beauty" protagonist; Edgar L. Masters of the *Spoon River Anthology* fame; Edwin L. Markham, George Sterling, our own John McGroarty, Harriet Monroe, Eunice Tietjens, and a score of other living poets of acknowledged merit in attendance, a successful gathering were assured. Then, too, Alfred Noyes might be lured to the coast and perhaps John Masefeld and Stephen Phillips. Popular? We venture to say the poets' section at the Panama-Pacific Exposition would be a loadstone of cultural traffic and repay all expense to the management a hundredfold.

DESERTION

Rhyme, supposing that all the poets leave you,
Where will you go to hide yourself away?
Is there no place where honorable Rhyme may stay,
No far elysium where Poetry will receive you?
Where do her veterans dwell, the outworn and gray?

Oh, many a long century you have lived content
In paired delights, or dancing sisterly dances;
Sounds beckoning to sounds like lovers' mutual glances,
Sounds wedded with sounds and shades of sounds, well blent—
Poetry, what new devices will enhance your beauty
As Rhyme, old Rhyme, enhances?

Helen Hoyt

NOTES

Mr. Wilfrid Wilson Gibson, of Greenway, Ledbury, England, is well known as the author of plays in verse and of other poems of English peasant life, published under the titles *Daily Bread, Womenkind, Fires,* and *Borderlands and Thoroughfares* (Macmillan). Mr. Gibson's poems would have had the lead this month, except that their tragic subject seemed too grim an introduction to a midsummer number.

Mr. William Rose Benét, of New York, who has also appeared before in POETRY, is one of the editors of *The Century*, and the author of *Merchants from Cathay* (Century Co.) and *The Falconer of God and Other Poems* (Yale Univ. Press).

Miss Helen Hoyt, of Appleton, Wis., whom we introduced two years ago, has not yet published a volume.

Mr. Nathan Haskell Dole, of Boston, is well known as the author of many books of verse and prose, and the translator and editor of important works from many languages.

Others who, like Mr. Dole, have not hitherto appeared in Poetry, are:

Nancy Campbell (Mrs. Joseph Campbell), of Dublin, Ireland, author of *Agnus Dei* (Maunsel).

Mr. James Branch Cabell, of Dumbarton Grange, Va., though a journalist and novelist, has published no verse as yet except incidental lyrics in his novels.

Miss Louise Mallinckrodt Kueffner, formerly of Illinois and St. Louis, and now in the Vassar faculty, has published no verse.

Mr. Max Endicoff, of New York, has contributed verse and prose to *The Masses* and other socialist periodicals.

Wanda Petrunkevitch (Mrs. Alexander) of Saranac Lake, New York, has published verse in various magazines.

Miss Louise Adèle Carter, born in 1897 in Houston, Texas, and resident of late in Honolulu, has published verse in Texas papers and magazines.

Mr. Ellwood Colahan is a young, and as yet unpublished, poet, now resident in New York.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Original Verse:

In the Pastures of the Green, by Henry M. Hopewell. Howard D. Barrett, Chicago.

Submerged, by Maxim Gorki. Gorham Press, Boston.

Our Gleaming Days, by Daniel Sargent. Gorham Press.

Processionals, by John Curtis Underwood. Kennerley.

The New World, by Witter Bynner. Kennerley.

My Islands, by Mary Dillingham Frear. Frank D. Beattys & Co., New York.

Songs of Chaos, by Herbert Read. Elkin Mathews, London.

Sonnets to Sidney Lanier, by Clifford Anderson Lanier. B. W. Huebsch, Boston.

Youth, by Isaac Rosenberg. Nardiczky, Printer: London.

Prayer for Peace and Other Poems, by William Samuel Johnson. Kennerley.

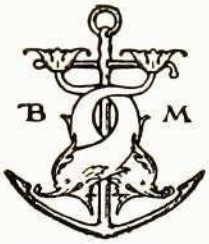
The Gates of Utterance, by Gladys Cromwell. Sherman, French & Co., Boston.

Plays:

Barbarians, by Robert DeCamp Leland. The Poetry-Drama Company, Boston.

Translations:

Some Love Songs of Petrarch, Translated and Annotated, and with a Biographical Introduction: by Wm. Dudley Foulke, LL.D. Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, London.



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Poetry

A Magazine of Verse

Edited by Harriet Monroe

SEPTEMBER, 1915

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Aglavaine—Driftwood Lewis Worthington Smith

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CHALKS: BLACK, RED, WHITE

LEAD SOLDIERS

THE nursery fire burns brightly, crackling in cheerful little explosions and trails of sparks, up the back of the chimney. Miniature rockets peppering the black bricks with golden stars, as though a gala flamed a night of victorious wars.

The nodding mandarin on the bookcase moves his head forward and back, slowly, and looks into the air with his blue-green eyes. He stares into the air and nods—forward and back. The red rose in his hand is a crimson splash on his yellow coat. Forward and back, and his blue-green eyes stare into the air, and he nods—nods.

Tommy's soldiers march to battle,
Trumpets flare and snare-drums rattle.
Bayonets flash, and sabres glance—

How the horses snort and prance!
Cannon drawn up in a line
Glitter in the dizzy shine
Of the morning sunlight. Flags
Ripple colors in great jags.
Red blows out, then blue, then green;
Then all three—a weaving sheen
Of prismed patriotism. March
Tommy's soldiers, stiff and starch,
Boldly stepping to the rattle
Of the drums, they go to battle.

Tommy lies on his stomach on the floor and directs his columns. He puts his infantry in front, and before them ambles a mounted band. Their instruments make a strand of gold before the scarlet-tunicked soldiers, and they take very long steps on their little green platforms, and from the ranks bursts the song of Tommy's soldiers marching to battle. The song jolts a little, as the green platforms stick on the thick carpet. Tommy wheels his guns round the edge of a box of blocks, and places a squad of cavalry on the commanding eminence of a footstool.

The fire snaps pleasantly, and the old Chinaman nods—nods. The fire makes the red rose in his hand glow and twist. Hist! That is a bold song Tommy's soldiers sing as they march along to battle.

Crack! Rattle! The sparks fly up the chimney.

Tommy's army's off to war—
Not a soldier knows what for.
But he knows about his rifle,
How to shoot it, and a trifle
Of the proper thing to do
When it's he who is shot through.
Like a cleverly trained flea,
He can follow instantly
Orders, and some quick commands
Really make severe demands
On a mind that's none too rapid—
Leaden brains tend to the vapid.
But how beautifully dressed
Is this army! How impressed
Tommy is when at his heel
All his baggage wagons wheel
About the patterned carpet, and,
Moving up his heavy guns,
He sees them glow with diamond suns
Flashing all along each barrel.
And the gold and blue apparel
Of his gunners is a joy.
Tommy is a lucky boy.
Boom! Boom! Ta-ra!

The old mandarin nods under his purple umbrella. The rose in his hand shoots its petals up in thin quills of crimson.

Then they collapse and shrivel like red embers. The fire sizzles.

Tommy is galloping his cavalry, two by two, over the floor. They must pass the open terror of the door and gain the enemy encamped under the wash-stand. The mounted band is very grand, playing allegro and leading the infantry on at the double quick. The tassel of the hearth-rug has flung down the bass drum, and he and his dapple-gray horse lie overtipped, slipped out of line, with the little lead drumsticks glistening to the fire's shine.

The fire burns and crackles, and tickles the tripped bass drum with its sparkles.

The marching army hitches its little green platforms valiantly, and steadily approaches the door. The overturned bass-drummer, lying on the hearth-rug, melting in the heat, softens and sheds tears. The song jeers at his impotence, and flaunts the glory of the martial and still upstanding, vaunting the deeds it will do. For are not Tommy's soldiers all bright and new?

> Tommy's leaden soldiers we,
> Glittering with efficiency.
> Not a button's out of place,
> Tons and tons of golden lace
> Wind about our officers.
> Every manly bosom stirs
> At the thought of killing, killing!—
> Tommy's dearest wish fulfilling.

We are gaudy, savage, strong;
And our loins so ripe we long
First to kill, then procreate,
Doubling so the laws of Fate.
On their women we have sworn
To graft our sons. And overborne
They'll rear us younger soldiers, so
Shall our race endure and grow,
Waxing greater in the wombs
Borrowed of them, while damp tombs
Rot their men. O glorious War!
Goad us with your points, Great Star!

The china mandarin on the bookcase nods slowly, forward and back—forward and back—and the red rose writhes and wriggles, thrusting its flaming petals under and over one another like tortured snakes.

The fire strokes them with its dartles, and purrs at them, and the old man nods.

Tommy does not hear the song. He only sees the beautiful, new, gaily-colored lead soldiers. They belong to him, and he is very proud and happy. He shouts his orders aloud, and gallops his cavalry past the door to the washstand. He creeps over the floor on his hands and knees to one battalion and another, but he sees only the bright colors of his soldiers and the beautiful precision of their gestures. He is a lucky boy to have such fine lead soldiers to enjoy.

Tommy catches his toe in the leg of the wash-stand, and jars the pitcher. He snatches at it with his hands, but it is too late. The pitcher falls, and as it goes he sees the white water flow over its lip. It slips between his fingers and crashes to the floor. But it is not water which oozes to the door. The stain is glutinous and dark, a spark from the firelight heads it to red. In and out, between the fine, new soldiers, licking over the carpet, squirms the stream of blood, lapping at the little green platforms, and flapping itself against the painted uniforms.

The nodding mandarin moves his head slowly, forward and back. The rose is broken, and where it fell is black blood. The old mandarin leers under his purple umbrella, and nods—forward and back, staring into the air with blue-green eyes. Every time his head comes forward a rosebud pushes between his lips, rushes into full bloom, and drips to the ground with a splashing sound. The pool of black blood grows and grows, with each dropped rose, and spreads out to join the stream from the wash-stand. The beautiful army of lead soldiers steps boldly forward, but the little green platforms are covered in the rising stream of blood.

The nursery fire burns brightly and flings fan-bursts of stars up the chimney, as though a gala flamed a night of victorious wars.

VERNAL EQUINOX

The scent of hyacinths, like a pale mist, lies between me and
my book;
And the South Wind, washing through the room,
Makes the candles quiver.
My nerves sting at a spatter of rain on the shutter,
And I am uneasy with the thrusting of green shoots
Outside, in the night.

Why are you not here to overpower me with your tense and
urgent love?

FENWAY PARK

Study in Orange and Silver

Through the spring-thickened branches
I see it floating,
An ivory dome
Headed to gold by the dim sun.

It hangs against a white-misted sky,
And the swollen branches
Open or cover it,
As they blow in the wet wind.

MAY EVENING IN CENTRAL PARK

Lines of lamp-light
Splinter the black water,
And all through
The dim park
Are lamps
Hanging among the trees.
But they are only like fire-flies
Pricking the darkness,
And I lean my body against it
And spread out my fingers
To let it drift through them.
I am a swimmer
In the damp night,
Or a bird
Floating over the sucking grasses.
I am a lover
Tracking the silver foot-prints
Of the moon.
I am a young man,
In Central Park,
With Spring
Bursting over me.

The trees push out their young leaves,
Although this is not the country;
And I whisper beautiful, hot words,

Although I am alone,
And a few more steps
Will bring me
The glare and suffocation
Of bright streets.

ALIENS

The chatter of little people
Breaks on my purpose
Like the water-drops which slowly wear the rocks to powder.
And while I laugh
My spirit crumbles at their teasing touch.

STRAIN

It is late
And the clock is striking thin hours,
But sleep has become a terror to me,
Lest I wake in the night
Bewildered,
And stretching out my arms to comfort myself with you,
Clasp instead the cold body of the darkness.
All night it will hunger over me,
And push and undulate against me,
Breathing into my mouth

And passing long fingers through my drifting hair.
Only the dawn can loose me from it,
And the gray streaks of morning melt it from my side.
Bring many candles,
Though they stab my tired brain
And hurt it.
For I am afraid of the twining of the darkness
And dare not sleep.

THE PAINTER ON SILK

There was a man
Who made his living
By painting roses
Upon silk.

He sat in an upper chamber
And painted,
And the noises of the street
Meant nothing to him.

When he heard bugles, and fifes, and drums,
He thought of red, and yellow, and white roses
Bursting in the sunshine,
And smiled as he worked.

He thought only of roses,
And silk.

When he could get no more silk,
He stopped painting
And only thought
Of roses.

The day the conquerors
Entered the city
The old man
Lay dying.
He heard the bugles and drums
And wished he could paint the roses
Bursting into sound.

Amy Lowell

FATHERLAND

There is no sword in my hand
 Where I watch oversea.
Father's land, mother's land,
 What will you say of me,
Who am blood of your German blood,
 Through and through,
Yet would not, if I could,
 Slaughter for you?
What will you say of one
 Who has no heart
Even to cheer you on?
 No heavens part,
No guiding God appears
 To *my* strained eyes.
Athwart the fog of fears
 And hates and lies,
I see no goal, I mark
 No ringing message flying;
Only a brawl in the dark
 And death and the groans of the dying

For you, your men of dreams
 And your strong men of deeds
Crumble, and die with screams,
 And under hoofs like weeds
Are trampled; for you,

In city and on hill
Voices you knew
And needed are still.
And roundabout
Harbor and shoal
The lights of your soul
Go out.
To what end, O Fatherland?
I see your legions sweep
Like waves up the gray strand.
I hear your women weep.
And the sound is as the groaning
Swish of the ebbing wave—
A nation's pitiful moaning
Beside an open grave.
Ah, Fatherland, not all
Who love you most,
Armed to triumph or fall,
March with your mighty host.
Some there are yet, as I,
Who stand apart,
And with aching heart
Ponder the Whither and Why
Of the tragic story,
Asking with bated breath,
Which way lies glory,
And which way, death?

Hermann Hagedorn

AGLAVAINE

Aglavaine came to the inn:
They gave him the foulest room.
He, with a heart to win
Love like the rose for bloom,
Slept with the rustling straw for bed
And cobwebbed rafters overhead.

Aglavaine's red-faced host
Kept revel all night long.
The bar-maid was their toast,
The devil's flings their song.
Still through the noise he heard the leaves
Tossed in the wind against the eaves.

Aglavaine heard the choir
Chant in the church unseen,
Then, with a heart of fire
For beauty fine and clean,
Ate where a clown might loathe to dine,
While all his fellows reeled with wine.

Aglavaine came to the inn:
Short was their speech and curt.
He of the tender chin,
Lonely and worn and hurt,
Saw through his window-round of sky
God's pageantry of stars go by.

Aglavaine sang in the sun,
Taking the morning road.
His was the course begun,
His but the firstling load.
They travel far and sup with sin
Who find good quarters at an inn.

DRIFTWOOD

Like driftwood burning in the grate—
Salt with the boundless sea,
Glowing with all the changing fate
That drove it far and held it late—
Broken and beaten you may be,
But sad experience leaps and flies
To light and color in your eyes.

Like wreckage tossing with the tide,
Borne from we know not where,
The wildness of the waves you ride,
However much your face may hide,
Has left its mark of foul and fair;
And brave experience leaps and plays
About my dreams of your dead days.

Like love before a driftwood fire,
I watch the colors warm

Paint on your cheeks each old desire,
Make you a thing I might aspire
To hold and shelter from the storm.
This is your lure, to drift wind-tossed,
Compass and soul and rudder lost.

.

The firelight dies. Our fancies part.
I, with the world, must shut my heart.
Poor wasted beauty! It must be—
The changing tide sweeps out to sea.

Lewis Worthington Smith

A POET TO HIS POEMS

You are born; you are no more mine:
I have let you go forever.
Demoniac or divine,
You shall sail by sea and river;

You shall walk by road and track;
You shall fly through wind and weather;
But nevermore come back,
That our hearts may laugh together.

Elizabeth Gibson Cheyne

THREE GUESTS

She whispered, "Love is dead."
She saw the raven hearse go down the street,
And closed her door.

Then Passion rose and pled,
Even more wild, even more fiery-sweet
Than Love, before;

And lingered in the room,
Out of an anguished moment to coerce
Dreams that had been:

Till forth into the gloom
Passion went following the raven hearse.
And Peace came in.

AT DAWN

They were all around me.
Soft as petals shaken,
Summer faces bound me
In a balmy zone.
I find it strange to waken,
And be alone.

Outer sounds pierce coldly.
Day begins her battle.
Wheels come—faintly, boldly,
Crunching through the ice;
And the milk-jars rattle,
Like frozen dice.

Let me turn a moment,
One more dream to number;
Seek the warm bestowment
Of the flowers that mass . . .
Drain the dregs of slumber . . .
Let the dawn pass!

LONG DISTANCE LINE

More wonderful than all my joy of heart!—
To know the sudden nearness of his mood,
That for a little moment we, apart,
Together stood.

That same low voice across my garden-aisles
Might not have reached my ear, for wind or bird.
But it has spoken across a thousand miles!
And I have heard!

Agnes Lee

DISCORDANTS

I

Music I heard with you was more than music,
And bread I broke with you was more than bread.
Now that I am without you, all is desolate,
All that was once so beautiful is dead.

Your hands once touched this table and this silver,
And I have seen your fingers hold this glass.
These things do not remember you, beloved:
And yet your touch upon them will not pass.

For it was in my heart you moved among them,
And blessed them with your hands and with your eyes.
And in my heart they will remember always:
They knew you once, O beautiful and wise!

II

My heart has become as hard as a city street:
The horses trample upon it, it sings like iron;
All day long and all night long they beat—
They ring like the hoofs of time.

My heart has become as drab as a city park:
The grass is worn with the feet of shameless lovers,

A match is struck, there is kissing in the dark,
The moon comes, pale with sleep.

My heart is torn with the sound of raucous voices,
They shout from the slums, from the streets, from the crowded places;
And tunes from a hurdy-gurdy that coldly rejoices
Shoot arrows into my heart . . .

O my belovèd, sleeping so far from me,
Walking alone in sunlight, or in blue moonlight,
Are you alive there, far across that sea?—
Or were you only a dream?

III

Vermilioned mouth, tired with many kisses,
Eyes, that have lighted for so many eyes,
Are you not wearied yet with countless lovers,
Desirous now to take even me for prize?

Draw not my glance, nor set my sick heart beating,
Body so stripped, for all your silks and lace!
Do not reach out pale hands to me, seductive,
Nor slant sly eyes, O subtly smiling face!

For I am drawn to you, like wind I follow,
Like a warm amorous wind; though I desire

Even in dream to keep one face before me—
One face like fire, and holier than fire.

.

I walk beneath these trees, and in this darkness
Muse beyond seas of her from whom I came,
While you, with cat-like step, steal close beside me,
Spreading your perfume round me like soft flame.

Ah! should I once stoop face and forehead to you,
Into and through your sweetness, a night like this,
In the lime-blossomed darkness feel your bosom,
Warm and so soft, and find your lips to kiss,

And tear at your strange flesh with crazy fingers,
And drink with mouth gone mad your eyes' wild wine,
And cleave to you, body with breathless body,
Till bestial were exalted to divine—

Would I again, O lamia silked and scented,
Out of the slumberous magic of your eyes,
And your narcotic perfume, soft and febrile,
Have the romantic hardihood to rise,

And set my heart across great seas of distance
With love unsullied for her from whom I came? . . .
With cat-like step you steal beside me, past me,
Leaving your perfume round me like soft flame.

IV

Dead Cleopatra lies in a crystal casket,
Wrapped and spiced by the cunningest of hands.
Around her neck they have put a golden necklace,
Her tatbebs, it is said, are worn with sands.

Dead Cleopatra was once revered in Egypt—
Warm-eyed she was, this princess of the south.
Now she is very old and dry and faded,
With black bitumen they have sealed up her mouth.

Grave-robbers pulled the gold rings from her fingers,
Despite the holy symbols across her breast;
They scared the bats that quietly whirled above her.
Poor lady! she would have been long since at rest

If she had not been wrapped and spiced so shrewdly,
Preserved, obscene, to mock black flights of years.
What would her lover have said, had he foreseen it?
Had he been moved to ecstasy, or tears?

O sweet clean earth from whom the green blade cometh!—
When we are dead, my best-beloved and I,
Close well above us that we may rest forever,
Sending up grass and blossoms to the sky.

V

In the noisy street,
Where the sifted sunlight yellows the pallid faces,
Sudden I close my eyes, and on my eyelids
Feel from the far-off sea a cool faint spray,

A breath on my cheek,
From the tumbling breakers and foam, the hard sand shattered;
Gulls in the high wind whistling, flashing waters,
Smoke from the flashing waters blown on rocks.

And I know once more,
O dearly belovèd, that all these seas are between us—
Tumult and madness, desolate save for the sea-gulls;
You on the farther shore, and I in this street.

Conrad Aiken

BOKARDO

Well, Bokardo, here we are;
Make yourself at home.
Look around—you haven't far
To look—and why be dumb?
Not the place that used to be,
Not so many things to see;
But there's room for you and me
And you—you've come.

Talk a little; or, if not,
Show me with a sign
Why it was that you forgot
What was yours and mine.
Friends, I gather, are small things
In an age when coins are kings;
Even at that, one hardly flings
Friends before swine.

Rather strong? I knew as much,
For it made you speak.
No offense to swine, as such,
But why this hide-and-seek?
You have something on your side,
And you wish you might have died,
So you tell me. And you tried
One night last week?

You tried hard? And even then
 Found a time to pause?
When you try as hard again,
 You'll have another cause.
When you find yourself at odds
With all dreamers of all gods,
You may smite yourself with rods—
 But not the laws.

Though they seem to show a spite
 Rather devilish,
They move on as with a might
 Stronger than your wish.
Still, however strong they be,
They bide man's authority:
Xerxes, when he flogged the sea,
 May've scared a fish.

It's a comfort, if you like,
 To keep honor warm,
But as often as you strike
 The laws, you do no harm.
To the laws, I mean. To you—
That's another point of view,
One you may as well indue
 With some alarm.

Not the most heroic face
 To present, I grant;

Nor will you insure disgrace
By fearing what you want.
Freedom has a world of sides,
And if reason once derides
Courage, then your courage hides
A deal of cant.

Learn a little to forget
Life was once a feast;
You aren't fit for dying yet,
So don't be a beast.
Few men with a mind will say,
Thinking twice, that they can pay
Half their debts of yesterday,
Or be released.

There's a debt now on your mind
More than any gold?
And there's nothing you can find
Out there in the cold?
Only—what's his name?—Remorse?
And Death riding on his horse?
Well, be glad there's nothing worse
Than you have told.

Leave Remorse to warm his hands
Outside in the rain.
As for Death, he understands,
And he will come again.

Therefore, till your wits are clear,
Flourish and be quiet—here.
But a devil at each ear
 Will be a strain?

Past a doubt they will indeed,
 More than you have earned.
I say that because you need
 Ablution, being burned?
Well, if you must have it so,
Your last flight went rather low.
Better say you had to know
 What you have learned.

And that's over. Here you are,
 Battered by the past.
Time will have his little scar,
 But the wound won't last.
Nor shall harrowing surprise
Find a world without its eyes
If a star fades when the skies
 Are overcast.

God knows there are lives enough,
 Crushed, and too far gone
Longer to make sermons of,
 And those we leave alone.
Others, if they will, may rend
The worn patience of a friend

Who, though smiling, sees the end,
 With nothing done.

But your fervor to be free
 Fled the faith it scorned;
Death demands a decency
 Of you, and you are warned.
But for all we give we get
Mostly blows? Don't be upset;
You, Bokardo, are not yet
 Consumed or mourned.

There'll be falling into view
 Much to rearrange;
And there'll be a time for you
 To marvel at the change.
They that have the least to fear
Question hardest what is here;
When long-hidden skies are clear,
 The stars look strange.

Edwin Arlington Robinson

COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

CHAUCER AND LANGLAND



HEN the English language was in the making —the English language, which the Germans call "the bastard tongue," "the insignificant pirate dialect," in comparison with their own throaty and mouth-filling speech; when English was taking unto itself Saxon strength, Norman splendor, and a touch of the more southern Latin grace, to become that powerful, flexible, and richly tuned organ which was to be heard around the world: even in those half-articulate and illiterate centuries the shaping influences were yet more or less conscious, and more or less incarnate in human beings of differing minds. The singers who wandered from castle to castle, or from hamlet to hamlet—ambassadors and newsmongers to the lords and the folk—chanted their sagas and romances in forms derived from Norse, Teutonic or French tradition, and fought on English soil the war of *kultur* even then.

It was fitting, and singularly dramatic, that the final battle of this war should have been delivered over to two such sturdy champions as Chaucer and Langland. The time was the militant and imaginative fourteenth century of Edward the Third, of his knightly son the Black Prince, and his work-hating, beauty-loving grandson Richard the Second; the fourteenth century of amazing contrasts—extravagance and starvation, beauty and loathsomeness, jewelled em-

broideries and vermivorous rags. And the scene was mostly London—London of the Norman court and the Saxon people, of lords and starvelings, castles and hovels, pageants and pests; little London, already rising into glory out of the slime of the river Thames.

Not that the two champions consciously faced each other in their intellectual lists. Neither may have known of the other's existence; or, if they ever met in those narrow mud-ways, no doubt the courtly Chaucer smiled when surly "Long Will" refused to make way for him, or take off his ragged cap to this retainer of kings. Neither suspected, probably, that the future of England, or at least of English, lay between them, that one or the other of them was molding a world-encircling language and cutting the patterns of an immortal art.

Of course all the odds were with Chaucer; then, as now, he was irresistible. Well born, well reared, learned in three or four languages, a cosmopolite who had carried his king's messages to Italy—Italy, then mothering the Renaissance—and withal, one of the most engaging and sympathetic beings who ever took human shape—it was no wonder that Chaucer had it all his own way, and that English poets have done his will for centuries. Reared in the Norman court, chanting French romances from childhood, he naturally preferred rhyme and the three-time iambic measure to the alliterations and assonances, and the harsh irregularities, of the pounding four-time measure derived from that Saxon tradition which was still dear to the hearts and sweet to the ears of the com-

mon people. Indeed, it was a proof of Chaucer's broad sympathy, of his strong mind and big heart, that he did not abandon English altogether, that he, like Dante, loved his "dames tongue," and insisted on writing his poems in it instead of in courtly French or learned Latin. It was a fortunate day for us all when Chaucer said:

> Let clerks enditen in Latin, for they have the property of science and the knowinge in that faculty; and let Frenchmen in their French also endite their quaint terms, for it is kindly to their mouths; and let us show our fantasies in such words as we learneden of our dames tongue.

So, while Chaucer did not introduce the French forms into the new combination language, it is not too much to say that he domesticated them. He made rhyme, and the iambic measure, as much at home in English as they ever have been in the romance tongues, and he opened the way for some of the greatest rhythmists who ever lived—Shakespeare, Spenser, Milton, Coleridge, Shelley, Swinburne and others—whose verse-structure, however varied, is almost entirely based upon the three-time iambic foot or bar, their four-time experiments being comparatively slight and incidental.

Thus Langland was left far behind, *Piers Plowman* was forgotten except by scholars. From his time until Shelley's, four-time measures were almost abandoned, being found only in a few Elizabethan songs, in parts of Dryden's two music-praising odes, and in a few other experiments. The iambus "reigned supreme," usually in the five-footed line which Chaucer's fine instinct had preferred to the French hexameter as better suited to the genius of the new language. And

even when Coleridge—in the *Ancient Mariner* and a few other poems, Shelley—in *The Cloud, The Skylark,* and others, and Byron—in *There be none of beauty's daughters,* and one or two other songs, began to vary the music of English verse with four-time measures, their experiments bore little relation to Langland, or to the earlier Saxon bards. And while Swinburne's varied rhythms wove with infinite delicacy new renaissance patterns, they never went back to the stern old Gothic motive.

The first great modern poet, no doubt, to put aside altogether the renaissance patterns was Whitman. In doing so, he did not consciously return to the music of the sagas—the Gothic motive, as it may be called—yet his free verse is more allied to Langland than to Chaucer; it has more in common with the old Anglo-Saxon bards than with Shakespeare or Milton or Swinburne. It does, in short, remind us once more of the older tradition—older, that is, in English poetry —though the reminder is far-away and indefinite, a matter of feeling and flavor and general rhythmic pace, rather than of form or tune.

But in the impetus toward free verse which Whitman led, and which is evident in so much modern poetry—French and Italian as well as English—it is possible that Langland and his Old-English predecessors will have increasing influence. Indeed, we have evidences of this—in such modern presentations of mediaeval music as Mr. Ezra Pound's truly wonderful paraphrase, *The Sea-farer,* for example. Those old poets will be studied, not from the point of view of

academic scholarship, but from that of immediate beauty and fecundity. We shall have a new realization of their power of imagination and of the splendor and variety of their rhythms.

And thus Langland, after more than five centuries, may come into his own at last. The world may rediscover that modern socialist, anarchist, anti-militarist, who in the king-ruled, monk-ridden, war-lorded fourteenth century, lifted up his prophet's voice for the brotherhood of man, and was called crazy for his pains. Chaucer took his world as it was, and left us a Holbein portrait-gallery of the people he saw around him; loving the processional pageantry of the life of lords and commons, and ignoring the invisible and inarticulate miseries of the forgotten remnant—the poor who froze and starved in hovels, and died in battles and periodic plagues. Langland, on the contrary, felt these miseries of the poor as the only fit subject for tragic passion: a great democrat, he made the crowd the subject of his epic; a great seer, he looked forward to the end of their miseries, not through mythical compensations in heaven, but through increase of justice on earth.

The urbane Chaucer for five centuries has led the poets his successors: in motive as well as technique they have been mostly of his mind, accepting his aristocratic point of view, his delight in the upper-class pageant, and almost entirely ignoring the burden-bearing poor. But perhaps Langland is like to bridge the centuries and clasp hands with the poets of the future, the prophets of the new era, toward which the

world is marching through blood and fire, through faith and dreams. *H. M.*

ITS INNER MEANING

Mr. Conrad Aiken seems to be "all het up" over the Imagists. In the *New Republic,* in the *Poetry Journal*—maybe elsewhere—he accuses them of a dark and piratical conspiracy to "revolutionize poetry," and of nameless crimes like "myopia," "synaethesia," "super-refinement," "over-civilization." They are "absurdly artificial," "singularly inhuman"; they are "tea-tasters," they "have no sense of tragedy"; they "forbid word-magic," (forsooth and forfend!) they don't know the difference between the "denotative" and the "connotative," they are guilty of a "tremendous limitation which entirely annuls their declaration for absolute freedom in choice of materials." In short, they are prosers instead of poets, and the sooner they are put firmly in their place, and the lid screwed down over them, "the better it will be for all concerned."

Why all this excitement? Can it be possible that Mr. Aiken has taken a "culture" from the imagistic poison, and is feeling some discomfort until it gets into his system? How otherwise may we account for the difference between the pseudo-Masefieldian narratives of the earlier Aiken, and the more athletic lyricism which the later Aiken may hope for if he keeps advancing in the direction of his offering to our readers in this issue? Has he not gained in "hardness" and "clarity," in "precision" and "concentration"; in a feel-

ing for "plain speech," for "tactile" values, for "delicate detail"—in short, for most of the qualities he accuses the imagists of fighting for? And has his growth in these qualities interfered with his use of poetry to express human emotion—has he not grown also in "intensity of feeling," or at least in the ability to give poetic form to his feeling?

The truth is that none of our poets illustrates more precisely than Mr. Aiken the need and the value of the kind of work the imagists are doing, work which he—not they, so far as I remember—calls "revolutionary." What is a revolution? The word comes from *"re,* (again, back) and *volvere* (to roll)," and means, according to the omniscient Webster, "return to a point before occupied." Thus the term is exactly and most fortunately descriptive, for the imagists, says Mr. Aiken, "take certain elemental—or elementary—laws of good writing, and proclaim them as the well-chosen principles of a new and difficult art." As their critic would cry out to their discredit, "they have only taken what has been a characteristic of all the best Anglo-Saxon poets, and made it a principle." By "Anglo-Saxon poets" we infer that he means poets using the English language, and he might have gone further and included the best poets of all languages.

For the point which Mr. Aiken criticizes is precisely the one he should praise—that the imagists are trying to remind us of first principles. If, in this reminder, he finds "a note of defiance, an air of doing something bold and outrageous, and of doing it in the face of old and powerful enemies," is

not that usually the way in any revolution—small or great, aesthetic or political—in any effort to "roll back," to "return to a point before occupied"? In these loud times, especially, one must shout in order to be heard.

And there are "old and powerful enemies" in the shape of long-established precedents and practices. Certain metric forms and rhyme tunes have been followed by so many generations of English poets that the modern world has come to think them fundamental instead of incidental, "elemental" instead of derived. And these forms and tunes have been covered over with ornaments and excrescences; the Victorian tradition especially has burdened them beyond endurance, until we need to "return to the point before occupied," to go back to first principles, and remind ourselves that the art of poetry existed before ever Shakespeare, or Chaucer, or even Homer, was born, and that it will exist when English is a dead language.

Imagism is by no means the last word, as Mr. Pound, or Mr. Flint, or Miss Lowell, would be the first to acknowledge. But in so far as it is a protest against narrow-mindedness and provincialism—against myopia, in short—it is a good word, and a word that needs to be uttered. In so far as it tries to break through barriers which for centuries have walled-in the arts in the "tight little island"—barriers which we colonials long accepted with sentimental loyalty—it is a healthy and vigorous movement, to be studied in its motives and principles, and its highest achievements, and not saddled with the weaknesses of its advocates or imitators.

Mr. Aiken complains in one breath that the imagists "forbid word-magic," and in the next that they are so preoccupied with such "delicate details" as words as quite to omit "passion." If he finds no "word-magic" in the best of these poems, there is nothing to do about it, for it is the fault of his instinct and ear. And if he finds no "passion," one is moved to ask what he means by that much-abused word. We have "passion" *ad nauseam* in the illustrations of popular magazines, showing the Gibson youth and maid in postures of ecstasy or agony. Are some of our critics so dulled by that kind of thing that they can not feel passion in H. D.'s *Oread* of Mr. Fletcher's *Blue Symphony?* If so, again there is nothing to do about it.

This is a cosmopolitan age, in spite of separative and mediaeval wars. Imagism is perhaps, in the last analysis, the beginning of a search for the Chinese magic, and this search will probably go on as we dig deeper into that long-hidden, far-away mine of jewels, in spite of Mr. Aiken and other belated and provincial Victorians. More than half a century has passed since occidental painting and sculpture began to feel the subtly regenerative influence of oriental art. The great art of poetry has been shut in more than these by narrow boundaries of race and language; but like these it must come out in the open, lift its voice over the seas, and spread its wings to all the winds of the world. *H. M.*

WHAT IS POETRY?

Recently I looked into all the definitions of poetry I could find. Macaulay, Dr. Johnson, Coleridge, Shelley, Plato, Watts-Dunton and Poe, besides many others, essayed to define what poetry is. Some of these substituted the poetical effect for the thing that produces it; some seized upon indicia as the thing itself. Some called poetry invention, while it is clear that discovery better connotes the creative act which brings to light hidden thoughts and emotions. But whether we call the creative act invention or discovery, the definition of poetry as either does not distribute all the qualities, and all the causes and effects, of a poetical production. Neither is poetry rhymed or rhythmical language, as some of these thinkers believed. Neither is it the rhythmical creation of beauty, as Poe declared. Dancing may be the rhythmical creation of beauty; so is this true of music. No definition of poetry has ever been made which would not exclude poems of confessed greatness; and many of the definitions include compositions which do not make the poetical appeal. In spite of this contrariety in analyzing the substance of poetry, the judgment of generations of poets and others informed in the subject, is united upon certain works. Not only is this true, but the average mind concurs in this judgment. *Hamlet* and *Othello* will enthrall a crowd taken from the street. The *Psalms, Ecclesiastes, Isaiah, Proverbs,* the *Gospels, Revelations* and many other books of the Bible are of almost universal acceptance. And they are poetry. The songs of Burns

interest and inspire the common man. The catalogue need not be extended to make the point. It may require a cultivated taste to enjoy the choruses of Aeschylus, or the dramatic works of Browning, or the luxurious imagery and music of Swinburne; but poetry is still a question of substance; it is a question of form only so far as form is necessary to convey the idea in its entirety.

The matter of substance as regards poetry is what the re-actionaries of this day cannot see. There may be revolutionists who are advocating a complete recasting of our inherited ideas of form: futurists who are striving to encompass ideas hitherto escaping from the material of words; vorticists whose emotions whirl without re-action and without falling and rising. But to my mind the complete artist must accept whatever forms are necessary to achieve the poetical effect. I see no reason for neglecting the sonnet, or the old French forms, or the rhymed lyric, if those forms best express the emotion and the idea. And, for like reason, where the idea and the emotions will be mutilated by the use of any of these forms I favor free handling, free verse. After all those who contend for the regular forms exclusively are under the delusion that poetry means a sonnet, or blank verse, or some of the standard measures. They do not see that poetry is the orientation of the soul to conditions in life, and that like great waters it may murmur or ripple or roar. If it ripples, use a villanelle; if it roars, give us words so used that the roar is not lost. And in addition to this these sticklers for the old ways forget that the old forms were

themselves innovations at one time. What was before the dactylic hexameters of Homer? and before the blank verse of Surrey? And how does the free verse of Theocritus justify itself against Homer; or the prose and verse mixed together in Shakespeare's plays justify itself against the classic verse of the French drama?

A poem comes out of the vibrations of the soul—the rhythmical vibration of the soul. For all vibration is rhythmical. And this is the vibration which by its dynamic comes up into words, and effects subtle and inherent cadence even where no definite rhythm is attempted. Out of this statement someone may construct a definition of poetry—a definition that will include all poetry worth including and will exclude all writing which is only verse.

Edgar Lee Masters

REVIEWS

The Shoes of Happiness and Other Poems, by Edwin Markham. Doubleday, Page & Co.

In certain of his poems Mr. Markham's democracy bridges the gulf between rhymed eloquence and poetry. In *The Man with the Hoe,* especially, the passion for social righteousness fuses into a white heat and is molded by the poet into a pure form of austere beauty. Here, as with Isaiah and Ezekial, social righteousness becomes spiritual beauty, and thus a lofty poetic motive.

But when the muse, jealous of other passions, deserts her over-burdened votary, the verse, however noble in mo-

tive, loses poetic magic. This is the trouble with *The Chant of the Vultures, Love's Hero-World, The Jews, Freedom,* and other poems suggested by the great war or other problems of modern politics. It is the trouble also with Lowell's *Commemoration Ode,* which may stand as our most conspicuous American example of a noble poem *manqué*—social passion not quite fused into a form of perfect art, and achieving therefore merely rhymed eloquence instead of poetry.

Two or three of Mr. Markham's best quatrains in this manner may serve to emphasize the point. The first is from *Freedom:*

> Man is the conscript of an endless quest,
> A long divine adventure without rest.
> Each hard-earned freedom withers to a bond:
> Freedom forever is beyond—beyond.

The second is from *The Fear for Thee, My Country:*

> I fear the vermin that shall undermine
> Senate and citadel and school and shrine—
> The Worm of Greed, the fatted Worm of Ease,
> And all the crawling progeny of these.

And here is the most eloquent quatrain from *Virgilia,* which is in the same class with the others, though its motive is personal rather than social passion:

> One thing shines clear in the heart's sweet reason,
> One lightning over the chasm runs—
> That to turn from love is the world's one treason
> That darkens all the suns.

The present volume contains many poems of this kind—a kind not without honor, even though the honor be not

the muse's own award. The *Six Stories* are excellently told; they move with a light swinging gait, from a heart full of sympathy and humor. *The Shoes of Happiness* is perhaps the best of these—at least it is the gayest; but in *How Oswald Dined with God* and *How the Great Guest Came* the motive of social righteousness is expressed in tales poignant and beautiful. Mr. Markham knows when to stop in telling a story; all his tales end with a good climax.

But the book has more magical moments—poems or parts of poems, which prove once more that Mr. Markham is a poet. *At Friends with Life* contains this fine stanza:

> There on the Hills of summer let me lie
> On the cool grass in friendship with the sky.
> Let me lie there in love with earth and sun,
> And wonder up at the light-foot winds that run,
> Stirring the delicate edges of the trees
> And shaking down a music of the seas.

The brief poem, *San Francisco Falling,* is one of the best in the book, its eighth line being especially beautiful:

> A groan of earth in labor pain,
> Her ancient agony and strain;
> A tremor of the granite floors—
> A heave of seas, a wrench of shores,
> A crash of walls, a moan of lips,
> A terror on the towers and ships;
> Blind streets where men and ghosts go by;
> Whirled smoke mushrooming on the sky;
> Roofs, turrets, domes, with one acclaim
> Turned softly to a bloom of flame;
> A thousand dreams of joy, of power,
> Gone in the splendor of an hour.

And in *Wind and Lyre,* perhaps the finest of his lyrics, Mr. Markham gives us an impassioned and beautiful prayer-song:

Thou art the wind and I the lyre:
Strike, O Wind, on the sleeping strings—
Strike till the dead heart stirs and sings!
I am the altar and thou the fire:
Burn, O Fire, to a snowy flame—
Burn me clean of the mortal blame!

I am the night and thou the dream:
Touch me softly and thrill me deep,
When all is white on the hills of sleep.
Thou art the moon and I the stream:
Shine to the trembling heart of me,
Light my soul to the mother-sea.

H. M.

The Poet in the Desert, by Charles Erskine Scott Wood. Privately printed: Portland, Oregon.

Mr. Wood's special distinction is that he really "enters into the desert," that his poetry really presents something of the color and glory, the desolation and tragedy, of this wonderland at our western gates. Thus the best of this poem is its *Prologue,* which is a desert rhapsody, rather than its fifteen-hundred lines, more or less, of dialogue between the Poet and Truth.

I do not mean that such an arraignment of present-day injustices, and such ardor for true social democracy, is beyond the range of poetic art, but merely that this poet's mind as yet mingles too much propaganda with its motive. Like Mr. Markham, he is in danger of alienating his muse by becoming an exhorter for social righteousness. To be sure there

are many fine lines, and passages of true poetry, mingled with the splendid and glowing eloquence of the dialogue. Its motive is big, and of a high nobility:

> I have pushed aside the curtains of the universe
> And looked in; and there,
> In a desolation never to be broken,
> Brooded my soul, in a great loneliness.
> I said to myself, "I will carve godhood
> "Out of manhood;

"Joy and Beauty are the breath of Creation," and all life is to be fulfilled in them:

> I know that the slow-moving streams
> Which press through the streets of the cities
> Ought to sing their cantata of joy,
> As well as the brooks which warble past
> The knees of the great fir trees.

And toward that fulfilment of joy the crowds are marching:

> They are not going down into the pits.
> They are not marching to the factories.
> They are not going to the furnaces.
> Nearer, more near; stronger; louder; more strong;
> They come, and the mutter of their lips is
> "Revolution. Revolution. Revolution."

To a man thus afire for a cause, poetry, or the lack of it, in his message may seem a matter of minor importance. But it should be his immediate concern, for the poetry of his message is its life, and Mr. Wood proves himself a poet not only by the sweep and power of his vision, but by the rich imagery and rhythmic beauty of his free verse at its best. On almost every page one finds fine lines, like this, of Nature:

> She holds the suns lightly between her fingers.

Or these:

I shod my spirit with the winged slippers of the wind.

The pools of evening
Wherein the stars dance, and along the border of which runs the liquid moon.

Also these lines to Truth:

Your face is pale, like the earliest dawn, before the birds have awakened.
Your feet are like lilies by the rim of a pool,
And your wings the mist of a cataract wherein the sun plays,
Making a delicate glory; fleeting; iridescent.

But in the *Prologue* no ardor for a Cause gets between the poet and his muse. Therefore, knowing and loving the desert, he gives us something of its varied magnificence in vivid passages of more sustained poetic beauty. His song of praise is a chant which needs amplitude; we can hardly do justice to its impassioned beauty by brief extracts.

Never have I found a place, or a season, without beauty.
Neither the sea, where the white stallions champ their bits and rear against their bridles,
Nor the Desert, bride of the Sun, which sits scornful, apart,
Like an unwooed Princess, careless; indifferent.
She spreads her garments, wonderful beyond estimation,
And embroiders continually her mantle.
She is a queen, seated on a throne of gold
In the Hall of Silence.
She insists upon meditation.
She insists that the soul be free.
She requires an answer.
She demands the final reply to thoughts which cannot be answered.
She lights the Sun for a torch
And sets up the great cliffs as sentinels.

The morning and the evening are curtains before her chambers.
She displays the stars as her coronet.

The poet is as sensitive to the desert's delicacy as to its majesty. He feels the incredible pathos of

> The little delicate flowers of the desert,
> Which . . . catch at the hem of Spring, and are gone.
>

The flowers bloom in the Desert joyously.
They do not weary themselves with questioning;
They are careless whether they be seen or praised.
They blossom unto life perfectly and unto death perfectly, leaving nothing unsaid.
They spread a voluptuous carpet for the feet of the Wind
And to the frolic breezes which overleap them, they whisper:
"Stay a moment, brother; plunder us of our passion;
Our day is short, but our beauty is eternal."

Perhaps this is enough to prove that the Far West has produced a poet who, though somewhat over-burdened with his message, is capable of rapture; a poet of large vision, of profound sympathy and faith, whose free verse sometimes attains orchestral richness. *H. M.*

OUR CONTEMPORARIES

I

Mrs. Blanche Shoemaker Wagstaff, who has recently become one of the editors of the Boston *Poetry Journal,* asks us to delete from our advertisements the phrase "The only magazine devoted exclusively to this art."

The suggestion is timely—we shall try to remember to oblige her. Indeed, this field, this wilderness, in which we were so recently a lonely pioneer, will soon be dotted with shacks, perhaps even with palaces. Almost from the first the *Poetry Journal* offered us the high honor of imitation; indeed, we had to hasten our first number in order to protect our title from the Bostonian invader. For over two years the *Journal's* appearance was as fitful as the typical poet's inspiration, but now, under Mrs. Wagstaff's influence, no doubt it will become less temperamental, and give us a steady job, either as friend or enemy.

Now also there are others, or rather, there is *Others,* for *Others* is a small monthly magazine published in Grantwood, New Jersey, and devoted to "the new in poetry." If the *Poetry Journal* is more conservative than POETRY, *Others* is perhaps more radical; at least its young editor, Mr. Alfred Kreymborg, proclaims himself a dyed-in-the-wool radical by putting a yellow cover on his magazine.

Others began in July, and its first two numbers present six of POETRY'S poets: Miss Lowell, Messrs. Cannéll,

Holley, Johns, Wallace Stevens and W. C. Williams. Its other contributors, thus far, are Mesdames Davies and Loy, Messrs. Hartpence, R. C. Brown, and Kreymborg. And we are promised not only Messrs. Fletcher, Eliot and Bodenheim, but a number devoted entirely to "John Rodker and the Choric School." Thus far *Peter Quince at the Clavier* is the most exciting thing in *Others,* for Mr. Stevens has a sense of words, of rhythm and color, and better still, of things underneath which these reveal. Mr. Orrick Johns' epigrams, labelled *Olives,* might perhaps better be called *Pickles.* And the love-songs of Miss Nina Loy, though *caviare* to such conservatives as we, are no doubt the newest of the new.

Then there is *Rogue,* that "light cigarette of literature," which appears now and then with clever verse, and drawings somewhat Beardsleyish. And there are the *Bruno Chapbooks,* "edited by Guido Bruno in his garret on Washington Square." And there is *Two-ninety-one,* a periodic stroke of lightning dealt on a reeling world by that friendly anarchist in the arts, Mr. Alfred Steiglitz.

Success to them all! It is the little magazines which should be encouraged and subscribed for. The great magazines are mostly engaged in the same game—that of getting a million readers. But each little magazine represents someone's enthusiasm for a cause or an art. It represents self-sacrifice, courage, some vital principle. *The Liberator,* beginning in a garret, ended by freeing the slaves. POETRY

or one of these others, beginning in a dream, will end by freeing American literature. *H. M.*

II

We are indebted to the June number of the London *Egoist* for the following bit of history. It appears as a letter to the editor of that paper, which was the first to reprint Mr. Upward's *Scented Leaves from a Chinese Jar* after their appearance in POETRY in September, 1913.

THE DISCARDED IMAGIST

O thou unborn historian of literature—(if you ever mention my
name spell it better than F. S. Flint, please!)
Do not believe a single word
That others have written about me.

In the year nineteen hundred a poet named Cranmer Byng
brought to my attic in Whitehall Gardens a book of
Chinese Gems by Professor Giles—
Eastern butterflies coming into my attic there beside the Stygian
Thames;
And read me one of them—willows, forsaken young wife, spring.

Immediately my soul kissed the soul of immemorial China:
I perceived that all we in the West were indeed barbarians and
foreign devils,
And that we knew scarcely anything about poetry.

I set to work and wrote little poems,
Some of which I read to a scientific friend
Who said, "After all, what do they prove?"

Then I hid them away for ten or twelve years—
Scented leaves in a Chinese jar—
While I went on composing the poem of life.

I withstood the savages of the Niger with a revolver:
I withstood the savages of the Thames with a printing-press:
Byng and I, we set up as publishers in Fleet Street, and produced the *Odes of Confucius,* and the *Sayings.*

My own poems I did not produce:
They were sent back to me by the *Spectator* and the *English Review.*
I secretly grudged them to the western devils.

After many years I sent them to Chicago, and they were printed by Harriet Monroe. (They also were printed in *The Egoist.*)
Thereupon Ezra Pound the generous rose up and called me an Imagist. (I had no idea what he meant.)
And he included me in an anthology of Imagists.

This was a very great honor.
But I was left out of the next anthology.
This was a very great shame.

And now I have read in a history of Imagism
That the movement was started in nineteen hundred and eight
By Edward Storer and T. E. Hulme.

(Poetry the crystal of language,
Passion frozen by art,
Fallen in love with its likeness!)

Evil is the advice of Horace
That poems should be given nine years to fix,
Evil in the day of swift movements—(for I hear that already Imagism is out of date.)

O thou divine soul of China
Brooding over millenniums of perfect art,
May you never be troubled by the impertinences of the West!

And thou unborn literary historian (if you ever mention my name)
Write me down an imitator of Po Li and Shakespeare,
As well as of Edward Storer and T. E. Hulme.

Allen Upward

CORRESPONDENCE

A WINGED WORD

Dear POETRY: It is very delightful to read you. Not only for the good poetry which I almost always find in the front of you, but for the expert criticism which I always find in your back pages. It is refreshing, to one who like myself finds the present tendencies not only a little startling but even at times a little bewildering, to come in contact with robust temperaments to whom all this newness is as bread and butter, a familiar article, understood to the full and capable of being rated with precision. In contrast, my own views must seem, as you call them, "mercurial." I confess to not knowing any more what poetry is going to be like after the bust—I intended to write "burst," but let it go at that—of imagism, polyrhythm, blastism, etc., has done its work, than I know what the world is going to be like after this war. (Not that I think these things a comparable calamity, or indeed a calamity at all.) But I strongly suspect that both poetry and the world will be much what they were before. And meanwhile I cannot help liking beauty wherever I find it—in imagism, polyrythm, blastism, and "conventional verse." Whenever I find a poem that seems beautiful to me, I want to quarrel with everybody who would deny its beauty either on the ground that it is "not poetry" or that it is "too old-fashioned." And when I don't find beauty in the quarter where it has been heralded, I want to

quarrel with those who would put it there by definition. Thus my views must seem chaotic to those who know what beauty is, by what laws it is produced, who are in fact the *entrepreneurs* of the enterprise. Now while the absence of beauty seems to me a thing easy to explain, beauty always appears to me in the light of a miracle. I dissemble my awe in descriptive phrases, I make an attempt to relate this miracle to that miracle, but I do not conceive my remarks to be in the nature of a chemical analysis of the product before me. Thus I tried to convey what was really a deep admiration for the *Spoon River Anthology* of Edgar Lee Masters, and I am sorry that it left you with the impression that I wanted him to do it over again. Nor, when I expressed the feeling that if this poet had had more of our American romanticism he might have given a completer representation of American life, I did not mean that I wanted him to be another O. Henry. I merely meant that the ironic view of life is not the comedic view of life, and that *some* aspects of our American scene retain more of their own color if presented comedically —or so it seemed to me. But you do me too much honor to take my statement so seriously. It is merely true, and probably not at all important. Only let me subscribe myself to your own enthusiasm—for I too have been one of the *Anthology's* admirers from the beginning. *Floyd Dell*

NOTES

Of the contributors to the present number, Miss Amy Lowell, of Brookline, Mass., needs no introduction to readers of POETRY. Miss Lowell's experiments in "polyphonic prose" have attracted much attention ever since last April, when POETRY published the extravaganza *Red Slippers. Lead Soldiers* is the longest and most serious work she has thus far attempted in that manner. Miss Lowell will soon publish through the Macmillan Company, a book of essays on modern French poets.

Mr. Hermann Hagedorn, of Fairfield, Conn., "Agnes Lee," of Chicago, and Mrs. Elizabeth Gibson Cheyne, of Oxford, England, have also appeared before in POETRY. Mr. Hagedorn's latest book, Poems and Ballads, was published in 1912 by the Houghton-Mifflin Co. Mrs. Cheyne is the author of *The Way of the Lord* and other books of verse and prose. The latest book of Agnes Lee (Mrs. Otto Freer) is *The Sharing* (Sherman, French & Co.).

Mr. Edwin Arlington Robinson, of New York, is well known as the author of *Children of the Night, Captain Craig,* and *The Town Down the River.* A new edition of *Captain Craig* was published last spring by Macmillan.

Mr. Lewis Worthington Smith, professor of English at Drake University, Des Moines, Iowa, is the author of a small volume of poems, *In the Furrow,* and a contributor to numerous magazines.

Mr. Conrad Aiken, of Boston, is the author of *Earth Triumphant,* Macmillan Co., New York.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Original Verse:

The Sinking of the Titanic, by C. Victor Stahl. Sherman, French & Co.

Hands Across the Sea, Sonnets in Praise of King Albert and His Belgians, by Isabelle Howe Fiske. Privately printed.

Loose Leaves, 1, 2, and 3, including *Helen, a Lyrical Drama*, by Edward Storer. Privately printed.

Red Roses, by Helen Carew. Longmans, Green and Co., London.

Interflow, by Geoffrey Faber. Constable & Co. Ltd., London.

Symbolical Poems of William Blake, edited by Frederick E. Pierce, Ph.D. Yale University Press, New Haven.

Essays:

Poetry and War, by Sir Herbert Warren. Oxford University Press, London.



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Poetry

A Magazine of Verse

VOLUME VI
April-September, 1915

Edited by
Harriet Monroe



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Errata:

Page 126, last line, for *William Griffi* read *William Griffith.*
Page 207, line 11, for *King* read *K'ung.*
Page 215, last line, for *éy through made waters* read *fly through mad waters.*

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To have great poets
there must be great audiences too.

—Whitman.